University of Alberta

Building Organizational Knowledge Through Evaluation

by

Catherine Davis-Herbert

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Date: September 13, 1999

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled " **Building Organizational Knowledge Through Evaluation**" submitted by Catherine Davis-Herbert in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Education

Paula Brook
Dr. Paula Brook, Supervisor

M. Cleveland-Innes
Dr. Marti Cleveland-Innes

Jose DaCosta
Dr. Jose DaCosta

Date: Sept. 3, 1999

Abstract

This study examined how knowledge is created through evaluation by the leaders of four, exemplary, college-corporate, collaborative programs in Western Canada. The research was conducted using a qualitative approach: data were collected in nine semi-structured interviews. The information provided was analyzed both inductively and deductively.

This project suggests that these participatory leaders acted as internal evaluators, relying on idiosyncratic blends of informal and formal assessment that favored qualitative and formative strategies. The approaches chosen and the application of evaluation within the partnership supported collaboration, sensemaking, and contemporary leadership theory. The leaders felt that their assessment activities enhanced programming quality, and evaluative findings were effectively and efficiently applied. Evaluation was used to build personal and organizational knowledge. Insights revealed the nature and progress of specific program initiatives, as well as, built skills, knowledge, and attitudes that were transferable to other aspects of the leaders' professional lives and organizational operations.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Identification of the Problem

There are approximately 175 institutions represented by the national Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), serving over 1.5 million adult learners (ACCC, 1996). Forming partnerships with business and industry offers these community college providers with business-industry expertise and other valued resources, such as access to new markets. These benefits are seen by colleges as counter-measures against increased private provider competition, rising student consumerism, depleting public funds, changing technology, and ongoing faculty and staff professional development needs (Knowles, 1995; Powers et al, 1988). Consequently, the emerging vision of the modern, Canadian, community college is that of a marketplace-oriented institution (ACCC, 1992; College Canada, 1996; Latrophe, 1999).

Successful collaborative leaders are accountable for balancing student, community, and marketplace needs and expectations, as well as making decisions to ensure ongoing program quality and success (Kanter, 1989; Powers et al., 1988). In order make sense of what is happening at any given moment in their program, these individuals act as internal evaluators to build insights about specific aspects of the venture. The resultant knowledge is a valuable organizational asset, and in sharing their wisdom about the partnership, these leaders contribute to the knowledge base of their parent institutions (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Mariotti, 1997; Weick, 1995).

The community college, as an organization, is incredibly important to business, sociopolitical, and economic health (Day & Copithorne, 1995; Dennison, 1995; Jones, 1997; Melville & Chmura, 1991; Nespoli, 1991; Selman & Dampier, 1991). As Kevin Dougherty (1994), in *The Contradictory College. The conflicting origins, impacts, and futures of the community college* states:

> Community colleges have not received the attention they deserve. ...Scholars and lay people often know very little about them, believing they are only a peripheral part of the collegiate system, a catch basin for those few students unable or unwilling to enter regular colleges. Because of their great number, openness to nontraditional students, and key role in vocational training, community colleges occupy a central place in higher education and are vitally relevant to many areas of social life (p. 3).

Therefore, the trends and issues that affect the community college are of concern to all.

As an entity, the community college has all the earmarks of an organization. It has a cultural profile supported by common understandings and language, captured in a mission and mandate, but actualized in a wider group vision (Cohen & Brawer, 1994). "Colleges emphasize unity - they seek a broad commitment to institutional missions from each component of the organization...Loyalty to the organization and its values, rather than loyalty to one's discipline, distinguishes the college instructor from the university professor" (Dennison, 1995, p. 180). Consequently, the college has a cultural history, as well as, a chronological record, which is formed of those noteworthy, pooled experiences of its members that hold a special place in the memories of its members. These communal reflections nourish and in turn are fed by the organization's shared norms,

beliefs, and assumptions. Collegiate culture also influences knowledge generation and sharing by framing the distribution of power and influence within the college; primary and subcultures co-exist within each organization, as pockets of individuals unite because they share similar ways of behaving or interests and knowledge (Levin, 1997; Stebbins, 1987). It underpins the development of institutional policies and procedures, which direct the actions and activities that help define the college's identity to both internal and external audiences.

The community college is a sanctioned, publicly funded, and thus, accountable organization (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Dennison, 1995; Selman & Dampier, 1991 Stebbins, 1987). As such, it has a legitimate hierarchy of leadership, which assigns responsibility and answerability over particular areas of organizational life to specific individuals in order to serve its organizational mission. The federal Department of the Secretary of State in *Higher Education in Canada* (1992) explains that the current postsecondary system is under provincial jurisdiction, therefore there are "...ten distinct provincial systems of post-secondary education - and two more in the territories (p.15). Each system allows for colleges, as distinct entities from the universities and secondary schools. Just about 175 community colleges currently in operation in Canada, most belonging to a national congress called the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. They offer various mixes of vocational, academic, remedial, and workforce education (Dennison, 1995; Greenberg, 1991). These modern colleges evolved, as part of a national, sociopolitical effort in the mid-1990s to offer all adults, who wanted it, the opportunity to participate more fully in their democratic society. At these institutions, citizen-workers learned new skills and knowledge leading to a variety of white and blue

collar occupations, as well as, mastered academic competencies with which to access higher education opportunities. This was true in the United States also:

> When they first appeared around a turn-of-the-century, community colleges were largely liberal arts oriented institutions, providing many students with the first leg of their baccalaureate preparation and others with a terminal general education. Over the years, this orientation changed radically. Today vocational education is the dominant program in the community college, enrolling between 40 and 60 percent of community college students (Dougherty, 1994, p. 191).

"Community colleges in Canada defy simple categorization" (Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, 1992, p. 59). They operate in diverse ways, increasingly reliant on educational technology or collaborative programming, to cater to an incredibly broad audience of learners. But despite their individual educational peculiarities, the community college in Canada, as an organization, is now more than ever dedicated to "...the requirements of the workplace" (p. 59). This factor is a common thread that is found woven through the diverse patterns of national collegiate life. The result as Dougherty (1994) points out is that, "...any substantial policy regarding vocational education, employment training, or labor-power development invariably addresses the role of the community college" (p. 5).

In Western Canada, there is a sense of cohesiveness and identity between these providers. The various academic, managerial, and boards of governor's of colleges meet on a regular basis to discuss common issues and will often work together to address system-wide concerns. In addition, special interest subgroups or committees will co-

operate in order to advance a specific set of goals and objectives. In part, this solidarity is more likely because each institution enjoys a somewhat discrete, traditional, geographic service zone. But the group effort is also strengthened by their need to maintain an identity and a market share that is distinct from those of the university system, technical institutes, and private providers. It also helps them formulate united strategies to respond to threatening or opportunistic contextual changes (ACCC, 1996; Dennison, 1995; Selman & Dampier, 1991; Sheffield, Campbell, Holmes, Kymlicka, & Whitelaw, 1982).

> By staking out a distinct training market for the community college, ...occupational education has bolstered the community college's institutional position. ...[It] has...created a new source of revenues, brought new prestige, and secured the support of the public and of political influentials (Dougherty, 1994, p.213).

This identity, as an institution that educates people for jobs, is one that is readily understood and supported by the members of the college itself and the general public; as a marketing angle, it is both envied and increasingly emulated by many universities (Bowie, 1994; Slaughter & Leslie; 1997).

Academic entrepreneurialism is an explosive and comparatively recent phenomenon in North American, postsecondary education (Bowie, 1994; Campbell, 1997; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Gerlach, 1992; Knowles, 1995; Powers, Powers, Betz, & Aslanian, 1988; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). This trend is evidenced in the escalation of business or industry partnerships with collaborative programming, contract training, donations, academic chair endowments, joint research and development opportunities,

and the establishment of specialized schools. This free enterprise ethic, which is tentatively being explored in the university system, is rapidly pervading the contemporary, collegiate milieu.

Janet Knowles (1995) uses the Chinese symbol for "crisis" to explain the challenges facing Canadian, community colleges today. She explains that this character has "...two elements: one symbolizing danger, the other opportunity" (p.184). The negative aspect symbolizes the contextual changes that impact the community college. These include fiscal stress, new technology, the emergence of a knowledge-based economy, increased international competition, recession, learner-consumerism, changes in workplace decision making and management, and public demands for accountability, shifting demographics, such as a rise in the number and variety of unconventional students, have forever altered the traditional operating environment of these postsecondary providers (Harris, 1996; Harwood, 1991; Peters, 1988; Watkins, 1995). Rising numbers of women, retraining workers, new retirees, immigrants, physically and cognitively challenged learners, and foreign students have been welcomed by the collegiate system's democratic tradition and policies (Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994).

One of the most significant points of stress on the community college is financial. Decreased or more tightly regulated funding coupled with more stringent accountability measures have challenged providers, who are attempting to offer accessible, affordable, and high quality, relevant programming (Barnetson, 1999; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Elford, 1996; Dennison, 1995). In short, the economic truth witnessed in the 1990's is a reflection of the reality predicted in the 1980's and described in *Systems of Higher*

Education: Canada (1982), "What seems evident is that the days of financial security are all but gone" (Sheffield et al., 1982).

In this harsh landscape, partnerships are the positive side of the context. They help to soften the effects of systemic stressors. Linkages to the marketplace can increase a college's access to funding, specialized technology, highly trained human resources, and potential students (Henderson, 1995; Jackson, 1996). The cross-fertilization of knowledge, skills, and attitudes from industry and business is also seen as being highly beneficial to college programming. Students in collaborative programming gain educational strengths that can be exchanged for gainful employment (Verville, 1995). In addition, the employees of corporations form a captive audience for programming initiatives and may comprise a significant slice of the non-traditional student population at partnering colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Powers et al., 1988). Government programming funds or envelopes and accountability measures may also reward providers, who plan and implement successful collaborative initiatives over those who do not (Barnetson, 1999; Dennison, 1995).

Because of these factors, Knowles (1995) and Waddell (1995) predict that collaboration between corporate Canada and the community colleges is an ongoing trend. Nationally, corporate-community college partnerships are now a significant part of the postsecondary entrepreneurial response. Knowles states that "...growth in the number of these ventures has been rapid in the past five years...promoting industry and education partnerships remains a central theme of the [Conference Board of Canada]'s activities" (p.198). This national trend mirrors the commitment to entrepreneurialism seen in the

United States and in the United Kingdom (Council for Industry and Higher Education, 1996; Dougherty, 1994; Greenberg, 1991).

However, despite the growing integration of the private sector and public adult education providers, critical voices in the literature oppose this shift, especially to the more integrated forms of partnership (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). A large measure of this discomfort springs from the divergent cultures, goals, and philosophies of the collegiate and corporate interests (Powers et al., 1988; Cohen & Brawer, 1994). Rose (1997) poses the fundamental question in the debate:

> Is the goal of preparing individuals for work the same as the goal of educating them? ...As linkages with industry become the norm for all levels of education, ...it has becoming increasingly clear that adult educators have failed to explore the ramifications of this issue. To read current research is to be struck by the absence of debate. ...As adult educators embrace...the learning organization, we might do well to remember that this is just a managerial trend not an educational goal (p.7).

In this heated exchange, the image of the educational provider is that of a not-for-profit, collegial, learning-oriented institution. That of business and industrial interests is one where profit is the primary motivator and the individual serves the balance sheet.

Recommendations on curriculum and instructional design from business or industry are seen as a tentative step over the line that separates the interests of education from those of the marketplace. Detractors are concerned that this blurring of philosophical boundaries and roles between academia and the marketplace undermines the integrity of the postsecondary educational experience by posing a serious threat to

academic freedom. This camp views adult education as a sacred trust, where colleges and universities are dedicated to promoting human development and individualized learning. The distinction between adult education and training, as well as, who are the ultimate clients of learning are serious philosophical points in this discussion (Bowie, 1994; Boychuk-Lapp, 1999; Campbell, 1997; Cole, 1998; Eaton, 1985; Dougherty, 1994; Jones, 1997; Kaufman, Keller, & Watkins, 1995; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Rose, 1997; Slaughter & Leslie, 1996; Verville, 1995). The most compelling argument from this perspective states that the welfare of the individual and by extension that of the society is in question, when a self-serving marketplace can dictate the content, structure, and instructional strategies of the postsecondary provider. The short-term, myopic vision of business is seen as being blind to the long-range emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and economic needs of the individual. Consequently, the position of the adult learner and society, they say is compromised.

Objectors also point to the seductive and potentially destructive lure of power and cash to underfunded postsecondary providers and insensitive administration. They feel that the financial rewards do not offset potential inequities in the status and treatment of faculty and students, as divided loyalties lead to a class system of have's and have-not's (Campbell, 1997). Another contentious focus for debate rests on whether such educational programs truly deliver what they say they can, or whether evaluation of actual progress and quality is subverted by socio-economic or political factors (Cortada, 1996; Henderson, 1995; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997).

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the link between quality and exemplary corporate-community college partnership and evaluation. In order to be more truthful to the complex nature of the phenomenon, as revealed over the course of this investigation, attention was also paid to the application of evaluative knowledge created and disseminated by leaders. Consequently, the role of the participant, as an internal evaluator, problem-seer, decision-maker, and accountable collaborative leader, was also considered.

Research Questions

The specific objective of this qualitative investigation was to examine the creation of organizational knowledge by collaborative leaders through evaluation in exemplary, Western Canadian, community college-corporate partnerships. To gain a deeper understanding of this issue, the following was also reviewed:

1. How did leaders perceive their role in the overall program accountability and evaluation process?
2. How did leaders feel evaluation affected the quality of their programming?
3. Who did leaders feel were the key audiences for their evaluative knowledge?
4. What lessons did leaders feel they, as individuals, had learned regarding collaborative evaluation?
5. What assessment approaches and strategies did leaders prefer? Why?

Definition of Terms

The following terminology is important for understanding this study. Due to the diversity of opinion, which exists in the literature and in practice over the meanings of these terms, multiple formal definitions and illustrative examples are included to clarify meaning in the context of this research.

Accountability:

In this study, accountability refers to the formal assignment and acceptance of responsibility and answerability for the quality and progress of a product, program, or service to a specific individual within an organizational framework by that organization's senior authority structure (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Klatt, Murphy, & Irvine, 1998).

Business-Industry:

Those entities fitting this definition include licensed, commercial organizations, which offer services or products to others for profit (Powers, Powers, Betz, & Aslanian, 1988). Industrial operations typically have a larger physical size, more complex organizational structure, and capital base than do those entities classified as businesses. This study will use the terms businesses, industries, and corporations interchangeably.

Collaboration:

In this study, the term collaboration was used to describe the involvement of interested parties, specifically the business-industry and community college stakeholders, in working together towards a shared set of programming goals and objectives (Folinsbee & Jurmo, 1994; Kanter, 1989; Powers et al., 1988).

Collaborative Program:

In the context of this research, collaborative program referred to a credit or noncredit educational program of studies that is cooperatively planned, administered, and implemented by a corporation and a community college in Western Canada. As Cheryl Boychuk-Lapp (1999) in *Learning Opportunities in the Workplace* contends, such programs offer knowledge, skills, or attitudes to "...facilitate employees' learning with a view to ultimately effecting organizational effectiveness and efficiency" (p.2).

Community College:

This term refers to a member of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC). For the purposes of this research, participating colleges were from Western Canada, which included the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Evaluation:

A common understanding of evaluation is not found in the literature; it is interpreted using a multitude of divergent strategies and instruments suited to specific circumstances and evaluator/stakeholder preferences (American Evaluation Association, 1994; Chen, 1996; Ewell, 1994; Folinsbee & Jurmo, 1994; Gardiner, 1994; Gardner, 1994; House, 1994; Jacobi, Astin, & Ayala, 1994; Madaus, Stufflebeam & Scriven, 1994; Worthen & Sanders, 1994). For the purposes of this exploratory study, evaluation was interpreted broadly to mean both the formal and informal processes through which formative and summative knowledge was created by partnership leaders to judge the worth or improve a

particular, collaborative program (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1994). This evaluative knowledge was packaged for specific stakeholder audiences to be used for decision making, problem solving, policy development, or sensemaking; and, it was shared with the leaders' parent institutions, thereby adding to their individual organizational knowledge base (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Mariotti, 1997; Weick, 1995).

Exemplary Partnership:

A partnership refers to a formal relationship between a college and a licensed business or industrial operation for mutual profit, profile, efficiency, social or institutional well being, and technical or academic advancement (Powers et al., 1988). In this investigation, an exemplary partnership was one that received provincial or national recognition for its superior programming quality.

Expert:

In this study, the leaders interviewed were acknowledged by their senior management to be the internal experts on their organization's specific, exemplary partnership. They had an inordinate and unique knowledge of the collaborative program (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Harvey, 1990).

Formal Evaluation:

This term refers to authorized and systematic activities through which organizational knowledge about the quality, merit, or status of a phenomenon may be created (Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1994). Examples of these activities in this study included: scheduled meetings in which specific feedback was collected or shared, such as program advisory, focus, or management group

meetings; instructors' standardized collection of statistics and information, such as oral, written, or skill-based examination results and course evaluations; data and information systematically collected, categorized, and interpreted by external or internal individuals, who are not the course instructors, such as enrolment and retention statistics collected by human resources or registration offices and professional associations or graduate survey data.

Formative Evaluation:

This refers to processes, which are designed to provide continuous feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of a program during its implementation or active life (Chen, 1996; Gardiner, 1994). The purpose of formative evaluation in this study was to create knowledge about the status, quality, or progress of a program, which was then used for decision making aimed at improving the program by addressing exposed concerns, taking advantage of emerging opportunities, being responsive to changing contextual trends, making best use of current and future resources, or addressing unanticipated stakeholder needs (Conrad & Wilson, 1994; House, 1994). Examples of formative decisions referred to this study, included those related to planning and budgeting, such as opting to expand a program to accommodate additional students by offering extra intakes or off-site delivery; canceling a scheduled course due to lack of interest; redesigning program content to meet changing industry standards, such as adding a technology component; or creating needed staff development opportunities, such as a training seminar or workshop.

Informal Evaluation:

In this study, informal evaluation referred to the ongoing, casual processes through which sensemaking about an aspect of the quality, status, or progress of a program was achieved by the partnership leaders. These processes were subjectivist, intuitive, and pluralistic. The performance of such processes was an expected facet of their project leadership (Covey, 1991; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Peters, 1987; Weick, 1995; Worthen & Sanders, 1994). These informal, activities included spontaneous moments in which problems or moments of interruption in the programming processes were recognized and selected for further study; social conversations with stakeholders, such as might occur at a golf tournament or during a drive to an airport, in which unplanned feedback is given; unforeseen public acknowledgement, such as receiving explicit feedback in a forum designed with another agenda or receiving an award for excellence; unanticipated inferences from a secondary source, such as an unexpected link between employers' productivity and graduates' interpersonal skills and attitudes in a technical skill-based program; anecdotal reports, such listening to the feelings and perceptions expressed in a spontaneous telephone call from a student; and casual observation, such as dropping into a class session and watching instruction or serendipitously seeing a student apply theoretical knowledge learned in a practical and productive way at the job site.

Internal Evaluation:

This is an evaluative activity, which requires individuals within the organization, who have a substantive stake in the program, to assess that same program (Love,

1993). In this study, the legitimate partnership leader (corporate or college) of the collaborative program under review was considered an internal evaluator.

Organization:

This refers to an assembly of individuals and assorted resources that act together in order to achieve common goals and objectives. Thus, organizational culture, history, and behavior flow from the group collective of individual experiences, assumptions, beliefs, values, and expectations (Covey, 1991; Folinsbee & Jurmo, 1994; Owen, 1995). In this study, a variety of stakeholders, such as business-industry partners, community colleges, professional organizations, unions, international associates, and provincial or federal government agencies were referred to as organizations.

Organizational Knowledge:

In this study, organizational knowledge was the wisdom or expertise generated within and possessed by organizational members; it was a composite of their own and others' expertise (Covey, 1991; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Mariotti, 1997). Organizational knowledge, formed by leaders in evaluation, was used to inform decision-making and make sense of the phenomenon under consideration (Weick, 1995). Such insights were also used to prove that collaborative programming supported organizational missions and mandates (Allan, 1997).

Leader:

A leader, in the context of this research, was the senior administration's nominated corporate or community college representative, who had legitimate authority over and possession of the most in-depth expertise in a specific

collaborative program. The leader was personally answerable to the internal management hierarchy for the quality and progress of the venture (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Klatt, Murphy, & Irvine, 1998). In short, he or she was the key person, who as Thomas Harvey says, in *Checklist for Change* (1990), was "... someone who has the authority and the responsibility to make a decision..." (p.135).

Program Evaluation:

Such an endeavor is a purposeful examination of a collaborative program to create organizational knowledge about the progress, productivity, quality, viability, and status of a particular educational program (Chen, 1996; House, 1994; Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1994). In this study, evaluative data or information was collected by both formal and informal means. The knowledge created from these was used either formatively or summatively for decision-making regarding: assessment of congruence between performance and objectives, the nature of program, assessment of the program's worth or quality, policy development, or comparative purposes (Conrad & Wilson, 1994; Gardiner, 1994).

Quality:

This adjective applies to a product, process, or service, which is recognized as having specific attributes that make it superior to other similar products, processes, or services (Barnetson, 1999; Harvey & Green, 1993; Peters, 1987). In this study, the expert panels of specific provincial and national partnership awards determined the criteria for exemplar status. Exemplary community college-

corporate partnerships were determined to be of superior quality to others judged in each particular competition.

Sensemaking:

Sensemaking refers to the process wherein an individual notes specific contextual cues. The person decides whether to respond to these environmental triggers. Then as Karl Weick (1995) describes it, in *Sensemaking in Organizations*, the individual then must build his or her own contextual "...reality as an ongoing accomplishment that takes form when...retrospective sense [is made] of situations. ...People make sense of things by seeing a world on which they have already imposed what they believe" (p.15). In this study, leaders judged whether to further investigate cues revealed in evaluation by collecting information and data. These were interpreted, integrated, and synthesized to create personal understandings of their project and its context.

Stakeholder:

Marjorie Davidson and Paul Temple (1997) in *Partnership Building in Nova Scotia* placed stakeholders into two categories, primary and secondary, based on their involvement and interest. Primary partners were involved in all aspects of a venture and have "...direct input into the decision-making process from development, implementation, and evaluation of the initiative" (p.23). Secondary partners showed interest only in specific facets of the initiative and were relatively divorced from direct decision-making processes. In this study, a stakeholder was a primary or secondary audience member with an interest in the program, who was involved in or affected by the program (Ory, 1994). These individuals,

therefore, were those either carrying out or personally impacted by the decisions made by the collaborative leaders (Covey, 1991; Harvey, 1990). They were internal or external to the organizational hierarchies of the collaborative program (Folinsbee & Jurmo, 1994).

Summative Evaluation:

In the context of this research, summative evaluation referred to processes, which were designed to provide cumulative feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of a program after it had concluded. The purpose of summative evaluation was to create knowledge for decision-making about the continuance or closure of a program (Chen, 1996; Gardiner, 1994). In continuance, summative evaluation was used to create insights that would help leaders decide whether to modify, expand, or downsize the program before the implementation of the next programming cycle.

Researcher's Beliefs

In a qualitative study, researcher beliefs and biases must be acknowledged and examined to help ensure study validity and reliability (Borg, Gall, & Borg, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1994). I believe that quality collaboration offers many benefits to both postsecondary providers and business-industry organizations. The mandate of community colleges in Western Canada has historically been to serve the needs of the adult citizen-worker. As democratizing institutions, governments and regional communities expected the community colleges to be responsive to societal needs, which supported the expansion and diversification of regional business and industry to ensure

economic prosperity. Industrialization was deemed an important adjunct to the stability of communities. Colleges were expected to offer relevant educational opportunities, which could permit the growing pool of secondary graduates and workers to participate more fully in the political and economic opportunities that the society offered. Business and industry have been significant supporters of community college development internationally and nationally (Dennison, 1995; Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Dougherty, 1994).

In the past, Canadian community colleges met those needs primarily by offering a mix of community leisure, remedial, and university equivalency programming, as well as selected occupational or technical training. Public funding provided the dollars to support program development and implementation (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). In recent times contextual challenges, especially the reduction or tailoring of government funding, have forced postsecondary institutions, including colleges, to re-examine this traditional method of operation (Elford, 1996; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Educational partnerships with business or industry have emerged as a way to create mutually beneficial outcomes for both the community college and corporate members in helping educational providers evolve and respond to change (Knowles, 1995).

In my role as a community college chairperson, I have seen partnerships in which business-industry and college leadership has worked together in a mutually respectful, innovative, and cooperative manner to create quality learning experiences for participants. I have also witnessed some of the challenges related to and negative spin-offs resulting from planning, implementing, and evaluating collaborative ventures.

Based on my experiences and observations, I feel that such partnerships are an experiential learning opportunity for the participants. In particular I feel that for the leaders of collaborative programs, the experience is a potentially transformative one. Managing a partnership program places leadership on a learning curve unlike any other in traditional postsecondary education, since this form of academic entrepreneurialism is itself so novel. As well, I suspect that experience in partnership and evaluation will improve the internal collaborative and evaluative capacity of those organizations involved. Also, the partnership becomes a part of the history of the partnering interests. Their shared experiences may well impact the culture of those organizations involved.

I think that these consequences are made all the more probable because the knowledge and expertise of the corporate or college leader does not stay isolated within parameters of the partnership. The collaborative leader, as the in-house expert on the partnership and the person in charge of the programming, shares his or her wisdom within his or her organization. This knowledge can be used to improve the operation of not only the partnership, but also the institution to which the leadership belongs. Consequently, I feel it is important that the insights of these collaborative experts be preserved as a resource for those interested in the future of entrepreneurialism and the community college.

Significance

Internationally, academic capitalism is a significant force in postsecondary education, influencing the programming, policies, cultures, and missions of both colleges and universities (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Kevin Dougherty in *The Contradictory*

College: The conflicting origins, impacts, and futures of the community college (1994) explains that in the United States, the community college actively pursues business-industry alliances and as such its current identity as an organization is now defined by this association.

> By staking out a distinct training market for the community college, one separate from that of the university…the community college can be portrayed as a unique institution, one that is more comprehensive and democratic than the more academically oriented and selective four-year college (p.213).

This global dynamic has certainly crossed our national borders. Over the past twenty years, Canadian colleges have embraced collaboration with business and industry as a way to adapt to pressures, including fiscal stress, new information-based technologies, shifting demographics, increasing public and private competition, and learner-consumerism. While there is surprisingly little published research on college-corporate partnerships either nationally or internationally (Gerlach, 1992), the sparse body of Canadian literature, which does exist, suggests that collaborative ventures with business and industry will soon permeate all aspects of national college life from curriculum development, instructional methodologies, and program planning to the professional development of faculty members. Nationally, this facet of academic entrepreneurialism is a transformative movement that shows no sign of slowing in the foreseeable future (Knowles, 1995).

Wendy Doughty (1997) in *A Framework for Developing Partnerships* reveals that over the last ten years workplace education has emerged as one of the foremost

specialities in adult education in Canada. She refers to over five hundred documented postsecondary programs in operation nationally, which collaboratively tailor educational experiences to business-industry needs. Despite this substantial participation, the number of recognized exemplary partnerships in Canada is minute, compared to the overall number of such ventures in existence. Correspondingly, the experienced leaders or recognized experts in high quality partnerships form a select group, especially when compared to the broad community of providers aspiring to create such exemplars. Therefore, these recognized collaborative leaders possess unique insights, which have evolved from their experiences in jointly heading partnership programs. Their positions empowered and provided them with broad access to virtually every level of the partnership program. As a consequence, they were accountable for the program's status, quality, and progress. In order to fulfil that duty, these leaders had to maintain the most holistic vision or sense of the program possible throughout its life span. Others, within and external to the partnering organizations, cannot hope to possess their rich knowledge-base or expertise, which has evolved due to their extended and intimate contact with this phenomenon.

I hope that this investigation allows the reader to gain a sense of the collaborative philosophy of these leaders, as they made sense of their programs and achieved their goals. As well, this research will hopefully give readers a glimpse of how partnership affects the collaborating organizations, as the leader's evaluative wisdom was shared with the parent institution. In short, I hope this work will become another lens with which to peer into and probe the multifaceted complexity of corporate-college collaboration.

Given the paucity of pertinent research and urgency of this topic in national collegiate life, it is critical that the perspectives of these current partnership leaders on the relationship of evaluation to partnership quality be examined. I am certain that preserving the knowledge of these current collaborators, which was grounded in their experiences with exemplary educational programming, will create a valuable resource that may enhance future postsecondary-corporate practice. I hope that this study inspires future researchers to build on this exploratory study and preserve the emerging expertise of our national, collaborative leaders.

Delimitations

This investigation operated within well-defined boundaries. The most significant of which was the purposeful sampling I employed. Over a twelve-month period, four educational and five business-industry representatives from four exemplary, Western Canadian partnerships provided the research data. This investigation was limited to exemplary corporate partnerships with educational providers in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, who were members of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. The nature and context of the community college differs from the essential nature and context of other postsecondary institutions, such as universities or technical institutes, and readers should be cognizant that these differences may limit transferability depending on their own personal situations (Dougherty, 1994).

The ventures, included in the sample, were collaborative educational programs, which had been recognized by provincial or national expert panels for their superior quality. The quality ranking, assigned to the collaborative program, was determined

against the individual criteria of each provincial or national award. I did not compare the criteria and judging expertise and methodology of each award in the year it was awarded. There may have been a lack of uniformity in the judging criteria and rigor of its application between the awards won by study member institutions. In other words, an exemplary partnership using one set of criteria, as applied in Award A, may not have been considered as exemplary using the criteria and judging rigor of Award B. As well the rigor of Award A or B judging may have fluctuated over the five year period used in this research, due to circumstances, such as the number and type of partnerships being reviewed in any given year; political pressures, such as not rewarding the same partnership twice; or having a change in the judging panel membership that resulted in a shift in the weighting or interpretation of various criteria. In addition, all awards, given to partnerships included in this research, employed qualitative evaluation methods to assess quality. Consequently readers are advised that exemplary, as applied in the course of this investigation, is a somewhat subjective label. On the positive side, these awards were highly publicized and much sought after. The judging panels included well-known and respected national corporate, government, and academic leaders, who have expertise in collaborative enterprises.

Face-to-face or telephone interviews were used for data collection, as deemed convenient for both the participants and me. Scheduling conflicts and limited financial resources prevented me from completing all nine interviews using a face to face format, which would have offered consistent data collection methodology, and provided me with the opportunity to communicate more perfectly with the respondent.

As a researcher, I engaged leaders in a reflective exercise, requiring them to make sense of their own experiences. In such a complex activity, the flow of insights did not emerge in a linear fashion. Participants revisited ideas, realized new relationships mid-interview, and in other words had "ah ha" moments as I was talking with them. These were critically important as the leaders re-patterned ideas about their partnership quality and evaluation. This mental activity allowed them to savor each unique memory and build a more integrated picture of their partnership experience. Thus by giving the respondents more control over the pace and direction of the dialogue, I encouraged them to share a more intimate and a less politically sanitized translation of their phenomenon.

Finally, the partnership phenomenon in the literature includes a diverse body of collaborative ventures. In accordance with the selection criteria for most provincial and national partnership awards and recognition, highly integrated and long-term contract training, cooperative partnerships, as well as, strategic alliances were the focus of this research. Consequently, relationships limited to scholarships, donations of goods and services, bursaries, funded seats in pre-established programming, joint research and product development without instruction, and short-term contract training were excluded from consideration.

Limitations

The interview method was an advantageous choice for this study. It offered me a unique opportunity to delve into the expertise of leaders in exemplary corporate-community college partnerships. As such I, as a qualitative researcher, had great latitude in freeing the subjects to reflect upon their experiences. The resulting reflections offer

the reader an opportunity to view the world of collaboration through the eyes of the participant.

Transferability is hopefully enhanced by the inclusion of rich contextual description of the phenomenon and the transcript samples with my interpretations of that material. Although this investigation relied on the selective memories of the participants, who were asked to reflect upon their experiences in partnership, I gave each interviewee the opportunity to amend their transcribed statements. In this way, each person could judge the accuracy and completeness of his or her own statement and make appropriate changes.

In addition, I reinforced the specificity of the study by qualifying the situational and contextual applicability of the findings. To further promote the reader's understanding of the phenomenon needed for transferability, I took special care to provide multiple, in-depth, formal definitions of theoretical constructs used in the course of this study in a glossary section with illustrative examples. And lastly, I attempted to clarify the methodology of this research, particularly the sections on sampling, data collection, trustworthiness, and data analysis, so that the reader might better follow the logic behind the design choices I made in this study.

This report is divided into six major sections. The first chapter provides an overview of the study including the research questions, definitions used, researcher beliefs, significance, and limitations, as well as, delimitations. The second contains a summary of the pertinent literature, including contributions from the fields of academic-private collaboration, evaluation, and organizational leadership. The third chapter contains a review of the research methodology including the sampling process, contexts,

data collection, analysis, and processes to safeguard trustworthiness. The fourth presents the findings of the study including samples of the qualitative data obtained along with my interpretations of that data. Chapter Five contains a discussion of the individual findings, along with a summary of the key points. And finally, the concluding chapter offers recommendations and conclusions based on the research, which includes my personal reflections on my experiences in conducting this study.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

This literature review will help define the nature and context of exemplary community college-corporate partnership programming. It will set the stage for my research by briefly summarizing information available in the literature on the context of postsecondary entrepreneurialism and partnership, the accountability and evaluation ethic, and collaborative leadership and organizational knowledge.

Collaboration as a Facet of Entrepreneurialism

A business-industry and education partnership generally begins with a perceived need. The proposed collaboration is seen as a way to address and resolve this deficit through a collective effort, which may include joint action and sharing of resources (Collier, 1996, 1989; Powers et al., 1988). Dr. Randy Garrison depicts the resulting partnership as a "structured relationship between people - formed and maintained for mutual benefit" (R. Garrison, personal communication, July 29, 1998). This humanistic perspective governs every aspect of the coalition, as it moves from idea to design and into implementation and ongoing evaluation.

The degree of complexity or organizational interconnectedness required to ensure the success of a partnership helps classify it (Kanter, 1989). More complex or specialized classifications of partnership are offered to suit the needs of higher education, health care, or a particular government funding structure. The professional perspective, context, and purpose of the author can greatly influence the classification system or model provided.

Dr. Peggy Quinney organizes education and business partnerships into three categories using this relational criterion: the Contractor-Client Relationship, the Cooperative Partnership Relationship, and the Strategic Alliance Relationship (P. Quinney, personal communication, July 30, 1998). This analysis offers a relatively simple way to consider the corporate and collegiate collaboration.

In Quinney's framework, the least integrated and most common form of college partnership with business and industry is the contractor-client relationship. This type of exchange follows the "seller-buyer" business paradigm. One organization, generally an educational provider, sells a service or good to the other partner - a business or industry buyer. Typically, such a "cash-for-product" relationship does not challenge the participating parties to change in any fundamental philosophical way to accommodate the partnership. The identity, mandate, operational norms, and organizational structure of each partner essentially remains very much as it was before the partnership began. A great deal of current, contract training, including the preparation of packaged training for employer use, exemplifies this level of partnership. "Contract training refers to an arrangement in which...a business...contracts directly with a college...for instruction of its employees, its clients, or its members (College Board, 1983, p.vii).

Traditionally contract training requires that: a time-frame for delivery of the instructional service is specified; a prescriptive curriculum is defined, usually in learner outcome language; a mode of delivery, generally using context-based problem solving, is requested; a specific instructor competence level is frequently required; evaluation may be requested with performance feedback to the contractor; and, a cash value is placed on the transaction. Preparation, delivery, and evaluation of the learning experience by the

education provider, in accordance with these pre-determined criteria, lead to payment for services and completion of the exchange (Powers et al., 1988).

The second level of entrepreneurial relationship is the Cooperative partnership. This relationship involves a substantial shared commitment of resources and time. The partners are integrated, working through their organizational differences to fulfil the defined objectives of their partnership. This is what is captured and communicated to learners in the curriculum of a collaborative program (Belfiore, 1996). This program is the offspring of the union of the education and business parents. It has traits of both organizations, yet displays a unique individual character. The parent-partners nourish the associated project with disciplined attention, so that it will reach maturity. The creativity, energy, and focus of the act of collaboration can catalyse profound changes in the way each partner looks at themselves, each other, and the world. For example, the literature states that experience in partnerships can help postsecondary providers learn as an organization, acquiring insight into the culture of the business world, learning how to speak to businesses using language and communication styles they understand, developing negotiation and problem-solving skills, and adopting accountability and strategic planning measures acceptable to industrial partners (Fritz, 1991). This development means that the College can work more effectively with other business and industry providers in the future. Consequently, their experience can translate into a renewed commitment to training and development leading to access to expanded markets of adult learners.

The strategic alliance is the most complex and integrated relationship defined in the literature. Both partnering organizations in a strategic alliance share an overlapping

vision and mission, engaging in a variety of projects, that support this united mandate. They are engaged in a stable, long-term relationship with far-reaching implications on an organizational and socio-political level.

> The development of formal alliances with external parties also changes internal roles, relationships, and power dynamics for the organizations entering into them. The greater the sphere of co-operation between organizations, the greater the magnitude of the changes within each one, and the greater the disruption to the traditional hierarchy (Kanter, 1989, p.141).

Because of the level of commitment, trust, and integration that must occur for a strategic alliance to occur, these relationships are the most rare of all the partnerships reviewed (Powers et al., 1988).

Business-education partnerships tend to be progressive in nature (Hanson, 1998; Harvey & Dutton, 1998; Jackson, 1996; Kanter, 1989; Powers et al., 1988). Relationships between education and business-industry partners typically begin with simple contractor-client exchanges. The success of these ventures may lead to more integrated, cooperative partnerships, which can mature over time into the highly elaborate strategic alliances. This evolution builds a history of personal trust, effective communication, and mutually satisfying problem solving procedures, cooperative strategic planning and administration expertise, and competent evaluation tactics.

But no matter what type of partnership established, all collaboration must begin with an assessment. Choosing which type of partnership and which partner to work with that best serves the needs of the organization is the first decision made by institutions.

Critical self-reflection and evaluation, in which each prospective partner assesses their own organizational and personnel commitment to the partnership concept, anticipated organizational strengths and weaknesses, resource-base, leadership and communication styles, and expectations, is essential before any final decision is made. Once a partnership is agreed upon, both parties must understand that any project has a natural life cycle.

The relationship begins with an idea, generated by one or two individuals and assessed to be the most appropriate solution to fill an identified deficit. Their enthusiasm and commitment leads the fledgling partnership into the planning and design phase. In this stage of the life span, the abstract concept gains definition and scope through dialogue that determines outcomes and common evaluative understandings. In the implementation phase, the promise envisioned by designers and leaders is realized through purposeful action supported by ongoing assessment and decision making. All aspects of the partnership are studied with evaluative expertise, diligence, and integrity, so that formative or continuous refinement can occur. And finally the program moves toward completion. Leaders use their judgement to assess if and when the need that fuelled the relationship is met or no longer relevant. Their summative decision must reflect the reality of the program. Such closures are natural events when viewed within the context of organizational growth, marketplace realities, and socio-economic change (Jackson, 1996). The organizations involved may reunite for other shared ventures, but these future program relationships will have unique goals and objectives, leading to new standards of quality (Powers et al., 1988).

Adult Education and the Corporate World

Employers traditionally view adult education as a resource that "...meet [s] corporate product, service, or management needs" (Powers et al., 1988, p.23). The primary business need revolves around the bottom line, as the success and survival of today's corporations depends on their employees' ability to control costs, be adaptable and flexible, and maintain productivity (Institute on Public Policy, 1991). In this traditional model, Gerber (1995) says that business interests feel that if employees, "...don't apply [their training]...when they return to the job, the course has wasted everyone's time" (p.28).

Contemporary adult education in the workplace is generally described as training and development. Cheryl Boychuk-Lapp (1999) in her thesis, *Learning Opportunities in the Workplace*, dissects the latter term to explain its relationship to organizational learning. She feels that training, which is thought of as having immediate applicability, and development, which is considered a process with long term workplace implications, are both designed to "...improve and increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency by first improving individual performance and productivity" (p. 3). Education in the workplace is a sociopolitical and individualistic activity because it helps assimilate participants into the culture of the organization (Brookfield, 1986; Friere, 1970; Marsick & Neaman, 1996; Mezirow, 1991). In this way, graduates would leave the experience with a stronger commitment to and a clearer vision of the mission of the company, in addition to requisite skills, knowledge, or attitudes. Training and development would thus, as Boychuk-Lapp says, [convince] "...employees to shoulder more responsibility and accountability for helping the organization succeed" (p.3).

This viewpoint is especially true in businesses and industries that pride themselves as being learning organizations. In these institutions, individual education causes organizational learning (Chawla & Renesch, 1995; Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Kim (1993) points out that, "...organizations can learn independent of any one specific individual but not independent of all individuals (p.37). Such learning still depends on personal experiential learning, which as described by Marsick and Neaman (1996):

> ...Begins with internal or external triggers that stimulate a response. ...Learners then review alternative responses, select a strategy, and act based on their cognitive and affective understanding of the meaning of the initial trigger. ...Between the initial trigger and the determination of strategy is an implicit filtering of the information through one's selective perception, values, beliefs, and framing of the situation...Actions can be followed by a review of the results, ...as well as, a deeper digging for the real reasons behind both intended and unintended consequences. Finally...learners selectively make meaning of the experience and retain these cognitive constructs as what is learned from the experience (p.100).

In a learning organization, the knowledge of one individual can ripple throughout the organization and change the very essence of the institution. Daniel Kim (1993) feels that for the necessary transference from the individual to the organizational knowledge base to occur that learning must move beyond isolated practice and crisis management to one where there is a recognized organizational model for learning. A framework of communication to support and stimulate this intellectual growth should be structured within the fabric of the institution, while the direction and capacity of organizational

learning is left free. This synergy of freedom and structure in organizational learning is seen as a healthy feature of institutional evolution.

> A company is not a machine but a living organism. ...To create new knowledge means quite literally to re-create the company and everyone in it in a non-stop process of personal and organizational self-renewal (Nonaka, 1991, p. 97).

As such, the learning organization fosters education, as a way to stimulate and enrich the culture by challenging norms and assumptions. This is an inevitable by-product of corporate learning. It defines the culture of the learning organization as one that is both dynamic and secure in that change. This is vital because "Companies that attempt to manage knowledge soon find themselves deep in the business of changing their cultures (Gallagan, 1997, p. 22).

Another major impetus behind adult education in the workplace, especially in safety-oriented industrialized operations, is the loss management ethic. Bird and Germain (1990) in their seminal text, *Practical Loss Control Leadership*, pinpoint how adult education can support the survival and prosperity of today's businesses by enhancing their ability to control costs and maintain productivity. There are three main arguments for this belief.

The first rational for education is related to human resource development in the technological workplace. For example, as companies downsize or right size, the remaining employees must be more flexible and able to work independently or in cooperative teams; smart managers are concerned with the retention and satisfaction of skilled workers. This is especially true as technology continues to put more efficient and

powerful machinery and processes in the workplace. This technology often requires higher or more specialized forms of literacy to operate safely. Without this, improper usage and maintenance can lead to expensive repairs and unsafe working situations with broken or poorly working machinery seriously affecting productivity. Recognizing that new hires require often-expensive orientation before becoming effective producers and that insurance rates, long-term disability coverage and worker's compensation costs are high, organizations willingly invest their dollars into training and development to keep skilled employees on the job. As Palmer (1992) explains:

> Looking ahead the need for continuous investment in the education and training of the workforce will never end. The rate of change and innovation ensure that. ...Most employers are expanding their investments in human capital. ...Employers are establishing new partnerships with education service providers...to provide services for their employees (p.24).

The second reason for corporate education revolves around a myriad of highly political issues. The trend in most progressive companies is towards participatory management, shared accountability, and inclusive knowledge building, such as in a team-based paradigm (Covey, 1990; Institute on Public Policy, 1991; Klatt, Murphy, & Irvine, 1998; Mariotti, 1997; Nonaka, 1991; Peters, 1988; Staniforth, 1997; Stewart, 1997). For example, unions and management are increasingly interested in promoting a work-site culture of safety and productivity, believing that it assures long-term job viability and competitiveness. This politically motivated ethic must be spread through the organizational members. Education serves that purpose (Friere, 1970). Employees are trained in the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to be full participants in the cultural

revolution. They need education to provide safe and secure environments for them to learn basic facts and skills related to their current jobs, as well as, how to learn and self-evaluate, in order to comply with ever-changing organizational norms and practices. Thus as Marsick and Neaman (1996) note:

> Individuals learn in a social context. In addition, they are agents for a collective learning, which leads to change. ...Forces in an organization often conspire to mould individuals, rather than liberate them. ...In organizations, individuals try to make sense of the experiences they have in pursuit of their work. As they do so, they either uncritically use socialized, collective meanings from the organization to shape their thinking, or else -ideally- they challenge these socialized views and proactively shape new norms through their interactions with others. (p. 99).

And lastly, the most compelling motive for seeking educational opportunities is tied to organizational legal and marketing needs. As lawmakers continue to set boundaries for standard operations, the courts and the public are much less tolerate of poor management practices that affect worker and environmental safety. Consequently, awards and penalties for failing to respond to workplace safety issues are becoming more frequent and costly. Leaders realize that they must continuously evaluate the knowledge, attitude, and skill levels of their general employees and subordinate supervisory staff because they are frequently held personally and publicly accountable if a preventable injury occurs. In addition, consumers expect modern businesses and industries to have safe workplaces. Reports of preventable injuries or environmental damage are looked at negatively in the press. Therefore, clean-ups and downtime are expensive not only in

dollars spent, loss production time, and poor employee morale, but also in terms of the tarnished public image the organization has to slowly rebuild or reinvent (Bird and Germain, 1990).

Ensuring business prosperity through effective training also contributes to regional and national economic growth, which benefits all corporate interests. "One of the main ways...to spur economic growth is by offering a well-developed system of...education, centered on the community college' (Dougherty, 1994, p. 169). Corporations need regional economic stability to have the population base of high quality employees and interested consumers needed to thrive and expand. The diversification of industry tends to support needed infrastructure, such as roads and hospitals, and it offers a variety of secondary support businesses. These interests can be customers of the primary business or industry or their suppliers. They, themselves, can also improve the standard of community living, attract new immigrants, and thereby lead to further diversification (Powers et al., 1988).

Thus, adult education is critical to any effective, business plan. Business and industry's investment in training and development renews the organization, improves, and saves employees' lives. It enhances workers' satisfaction and supports teamwork. It improves individual productivity, keeps processes up and running, thereby increasing profits. It builds organizational knowledge and promotes creativity. It protects property and enhances socio-economic stability (Cóvey, 1990; Bird & Germain, 1990; Bloom, 1997; Day & Copithorne, 1995; Melville & Chmura, 1991; Nespoli, 1991; Nonaka, 1991; Peters, 1988; Taylor, 1997).

Collaboration as a Facet of Corporate Training and Development. Collaboration with community colleges is one way of realizing corporate training and development needs. There are many reasons to support such a decision. In collaboration, business and industry may have tremendous input into the content, instructional design, outcome standards, delivery format, instructor qualifications, and timing of college programming.

There are corporate voices in the literature, which advocate for as much control and influence as possible. Some, for example, feel that educational institutions should focus on preparing adult students as a human product, destined to be a business-industry resource (Verville, 1995). The goal of education in this scenario is to offer a seal of quality, verifying that the graduate has specific, requisite, employer-defined skills, knowledge, and attitudes. The graduate is equated to a living currency; each person's marketplace value rests on his or her interpersonal, technological, self-management, organizational, and social competencies. This argument is seen as logical and morally acceptable since the individual, the institution, and society would all benefit from this approach. The student would gain lifelong employment skills, knowledge, and attitudes, which would translate into a secure job future and financial independence. The institution would provide a needed community service, create positive intellectual growth, help the individual learner progress, support the regional economy, and gather financial rewards and prestige. Society would have an educated, employed citizenry, and socio-economic stability (Day & Copithorne, 1995; Meville & Chmura, 1991).

An important impetus for choosing collaborative programming is that the college faculty offers incredible expertise in instruction and the content areas, and the college leadership is an excellence management resource. As Bassi (1997) succinctly puts it,

these academics "...understand how people learn, share knowledge, ...work together, ...and how human potential can be tapped through wise knowledge management (p.27).

The highly trained faculty, technical support staff, and graduate students of a provider may also form a pool of prospective employees for the corporate associates. Established colleges, especially in regions where they are the sole postsecondary providers, have innate status and prestige, which can rub unto partners and translate into valuable public relations currency; this connection also reinforces the pride and sense of belonging that many business providers feel in their community colleges. For some businesses, higher education facilities offer innovative research techniques, new data pools, and applied technology, creating a cost-effective way to explore and expand research operations. In urban areas, partnership programming can also give business and industry access to desirably located facilities (Powers et al., 1988; Taylor, 1997).

In addition to these reasons, some businesses "...wishing to cut back their internal training costs, businesses have increasingly approached community colleges to provide training that is closely geared to the needs of particular firms or industries, but yet is heavily subsidised by the public" (Dougherty, 1994, p.199). The government departments, which provide base funding or special pockets of dollars for programming that meets certain criteria to community colleges, are in fact offering regional business and industry "... a means of securing trained employees at cut rate prices" (p. 198). This makes occupationally oriented, collaborative programming a very attractive financial option for training and development.

It must also not be forgotten that there are also deeply-held philanthropic reasons for some forms of specialized training and development. Business leaders are often

community leaders; they frequently want to improve the lives and conditions of their neighbors by making sure that community college is able to meet the vocational, academic, and cultural expectations of the citizenry. This is especially true in collaborative programming that focuses on basic literacy (Bloom, 1997; Taylor, 1997). From this altruistic perspective, training, and development is a sincere act of social conscious, where an investment in human potential will have ripple effects in the greater community pool. These benefits include increased economic opportunity outside of the corporate domain, the personal growth and satisfaction of the participants, improved health and safety in the region, and intellectually richer home environments for community families.

Socio-political Aspects of Collaboration

Community colleges are democratic institutions that are accountable to a diverse audience of primary and secondary stakeholders (Davidson & Temple, 1997). Two of the most important are the government and the general public. Because they are publicly funded organizations, they have a responsibility and answerability to their respective provincial legislative bodies. And since the colleges were established in a democratic tradition, society at large has a vested interest in their activities. Operating a collaborative program with a community college partner is a socio-political process.

Government. Adult education, especially in colleges, is strongly influenced by government interests and values (Melville & Chmura, 1991; Nespoli,1991; Selman & Dampier, 1991). As John Dennison (1995) in *Values in the Canadian Community*

College: Conflict and compromise puts it, "Canadian colleges did not, and do not, determine their own fates... Governments, in particular...have always held a large stake in what they shall be and how they shall undertake their mission" (p. 170). Since Canadian colleges are much less autonomous from government than are universities, their responsibility and loyalty is to "...become directly engaged in the realization of both government priorities and community needs" (p. 180). If a government values accountability and collaboration, then the message is heard, internalized, and responded to throughout that province's collegiate system.

There are many ways for that pressure to be brought to bear. Dr. Bob Barnetson, Research and Communications Officer for the Alberta College-Institute Faculties Association, contends that government may influence community colleges to form partnerships with business or industry by both explicit and implicit means:

> One method is hortatory, [saying,]"Ed-business partnerships are good!" Another is authority changing, for example writing legislation to enable particular activities such as tuition hikes. A third is incentive-based, for example rewarding partnerships. And finally, there is capacity building, for example providing infrastructure to allow partnership to be successful. These approaches are more or less directive and overt. It is also possible to subtly pressure institutions to engage in partnerships through changing policies. For example, academic capitalism...tends to occur in systems where block grants from government have decreased, there is a growing use of funding envelopes which require a specific performance of institutions, and there is pressure on institutions to generate non-

> governmental revenue through...engaging in partnerships (Email, Friday, January 29, 1999).

Such incentives are widespread nationally, as federal and provincial governments are quite vocal in their encouragement of the integration of corporate and academic activities, especially at the postsecondary level.

> Collaborations are welcomed by governments, eager to distribute educational costs across the community, and many government sources offer alternative sources of funding for partnership initiatives (Dennison, 1995, p. 213).

These initiatives are, therefore, politically astute because they reduce taxpayer costs and enhance a form of educational delivery that has captured the imagination and support of the general population.

Society. Society views postsecondary-corporate partnerships as largely positive opportunities in keeping with the traditional ideology behind the community college system development. For example, collaborations can offer its citizen-workers advanced training or act as incubators for technological advancements (Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 1996, 1998; Powers et al., 1988). They can enable non-traditional and older workers to exploit new training, employment, and lifestyle opportunities (Alberta Government, 1995; Cohen & Brawer, 1994). The programming offered can enhance current workers' flexibility and protect against layoffs (Bloom, 1997). It can help companies guard against employee skill shortages. Collaborative programming helps address these issues by assuring that those worker-citizen-students are adaptable in

the face of continual societal change. As such, they are seen to contribute to the lifelong satisfaction and productivity of the individual and the society as a whole.

In addition, society believes, as does business that corporate prosperity contributes to regional and national economic growth (Government of Alberta, 1995; Government of Alberta, 1996a). As companies expand and increase their revenue margins, there is a frequently a correlating growth in regional economic development. Supporting industries, such as construction, retail sales and the food service industry, diversify and prosper. The economic advantage of increased industrial capability and competitiveness in a global marketplace is a socially appealing incentive for corporate involvement in postsecondary education (Dennison, 1995; Knowles, 1995; Powers et al., 1988; Selman & Dampier).

Accountability

The surge in collegiate entrepreneurialism parallels the rising popularity of accountability measures, such as program evaluation from the late 80s through the 90s in Canada (Dennison, 1995; Elford, 1996). Both trends are fuelled by socio-political and economic challenges, in particular, rising stakeholder expectations of accountability from public organizations, more stringent government policy, and tougher competition for dwindling provincial and federal resources (Collins, 1996; Eaton, 1995; House, 1994; Knowles, 1995; Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1994; Sheffield et al., 1982).

Accountability is a mainstream ethic in North American organizational culture. It is a term often used in conjunction with program evaluation, performance indicators, responsiveness, outcomes' assessment, best practices, and benchmarks. In the broadest

sense, accountability supports the quality or legitimacy of a product, program, or service (Dennison, 1995; Elford, 1996; Harvey & Green, 1993). In a formal organization, a person is given accountability by that organization's senior authority structure (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Klatt et al., 1998). An accountable individual must have a strong sense of what the quality, progress, and normal status of the specific product, program, or service should be. Without this insight, he or she would be unable to detect problems or interruptions in the flow of what ideally should be perceived or expected (Weick, 1995). Consequently, leaders need appropriate and timely evaluative knowledge. In many contemporary organizations, such individuals are also expected to systematically collect, categorize, and interpret pertinent facts and information to create evaluative knowledge for integration into the organizational knowledge base (House, 1994; Palmer, 1994).

Klatt et al., (1998) feel that it is a primary leadership responsibility to define and test the limits of individual accountability within an organization. Program leaders are responsible for acquiring the organizational knowledge base to perform that task. This requires that partners trust each other and their subordinates enough to demonstrate the "initiative, risk-taking, and creativity" (p.23) that building that insider knowledge development and testing limits requires. Moreover, they must be able to reflect evaluatively on their project, seeing how it integrates into and affects the organization. This process is akin to Freire's (1970) concept of praxis, which is central to sensemaking, that contends that awareness and expertise grows from "...reflection and action" (p.106). A pre-condition to this reflection is that the leaders recognize that this reflective thinking is evaluative thinking (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Weick, 1995). Ideally in collaboratively managed programs, the leaders pool their individual reflections. As an

outgrowth of this process over time, they learn to build joint understandings of the coalition. They lean on their shared organizational history and common vision to avoid viewing evaluation as an exercise in assigning or avoiding blame for shortcomings, and rather strengthen their own and stakeholder attitude that evaluation is a positive endeavor.

Accountable individuals are publicly authorized to act on behalf of their organizations. Because of their positions in their organizations' hierarchies, they have unique and increased access to people, information and data, and decision-making forums. In return for and because of this power, they are the decision-makers of a project, such as a training and development program.

> Picture a dog on a leash. [It will]...severely limit freedom. Now picture a dog running free inside a fenced yard. ...Room for personal judgement and decision-making means being on the loose inside the pasture. There are limits (the agreed-upon extent of...accountabilities), and there is room to move (Klatt et al., 1998, p.13).

Leaders respond to problems, interpret issues, and make choices, which directly or indirectly influence internal and external stakeholders (Doughty, 1997). These stakeholders recognize these leaders' rights to decide and even, order assigned individuals to act out their decisions (Stebbins, 1987). The leaders perform evaluative activities. They systematically collect, categorize, and interpret pertinent facts and information to create new intelligence on product, process, or service quality. This is a subjective screening process. Galagan (1997) describes three of Wurman's rules for information management that speak to this facet of information processing:

You understand something new relative to something you already understand.

> To decide which information is worth keeping, determine what you really want to know. Most information is useless, [so] give yourself permission to dismiss it (p.27).

In a learning organization, the resulting evaluative wisdom would be further interpreted, packaged, and integrated into the organizational knowledge base (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Nonaka, 1991; Palmer, 1994).

As legitimate authorities, the leaders are also politically accountable within the broader context of their organizations (Birnbaum, 1992). Leaders must act proactively to promote understanding by sharing their insights with their multiple stakeholder audiences. Leaders assume an educational role (Kanter, 1989, 1995). They must internally educate and promote their partnership, in order to safeguard it. In this sharing, the leaders can "...make their personal knowledge available to others" (Nonaka, 1991).

Evaluation as a Facet of Accountability. Evaluation is a direct offshoot of the accountability movement. Although widely used throughout scholarly works and in the vernacular, evaluation is a term that has many meanings depending on the needs, experiences, and knowledge of a particular audience and communicator. In this sense, it is as relative a term as quality.

Evaluation may be considered a professional judgement or statement of worth, as in an expert opinion. It may be perceived as formal measurement, which may be compared against a standardized scale. Evaluation may also be thought of as the formalized determination of the degree of discrepancy or congruence between desired or specified objectives and actual outcomes (Folinsbee & Jurmo, 1994). Some consider

evaluation to be a decision-oriented process, which identifies issues or problems, and then collects, categorizes, and interprets data to create knowledge with which to make necessary decisions to resolve the situation. Others think evaluation is the holistic examination of a program, object, or process, including anticipated and unanticipated outcomes (Ewell, 1994; Gardner, 1994; Jacobi, Astin, & Ayala, 1994). And finally some like Rosemary Caffarella (1994) considers informal and unplanned activities to constitute a valid form of evaluation, which "...are a critical part of a program planner's responsibilities" both "prior to the start of the program, during the program, or after the program has been completed" (p.124). Kaufman et al. (1995) caution that in part because of this confusion, "Evaluation is an underused and misunderstood process that is often and inappropriately or unwisely applied, thus yielding harmful results (p.8).

In the accountability-oriented environment of the 90s, the leaders of these partnerships are critical in ensuring program success. Their leadership, including their evaluative skills, knowledge, and attitudes, can literally make or break a collaboration (Knowles, 1995). As leaders, they generate organizational knowledge about the coalition through a variety of evaluative strategies. The resulting insights enrich and sustain the collaborative programming, and support the ongoing viability of the partnering organizations as a whole (Davenport & Prusak, 1995).

Socio-political Aspects of Accountability and Evaluation

Evaluation mirrors the complex human affairs, which it attempts to evaluate (Conrad & Wilson, 1994; Gardner, 1994; House, 1994; Ory, 1994). Personalities, beliefs, values, politics, culture, expectations, shared meanings, and norms of individuals

and organizations all play a part. Image Theory, as described by Thomas Tumblin, places tremendous weight on the influence of culture (beliefs, values, and shared meanings) and vision (goals) on evaluations connected to decision making (Tumblin, 1997). For example, the evaluative knowledge created by a partnership leader is steeped in his or her personal judgment. That judgement reflects his or her personal values and beliefs (Mezirow, 1991; Weick, 1995; Marsick & Neaman, 1996; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). Therefore, individual values and beliefs can affect organizational knowledge development through evaluation, which can affect organizational culture (Harris, 1996; Levin, 1997).

Lincoln and Guba (1989) support this linkage of values to insight, feeling that evaluation is a constructivist act producing "reconstructions in which facts and values are inextricably linked. Valuing is an intrinsic part of the evaluation process, providing the basis for the attributed meaning" (p. 109). Therefore, value-free evaluation and knowledge production is an unrealistic vision in community college and business-industry partnerships. Acknowledging and justifying values would seem a sensible alternative to pretending they do not exist or affect the evaluative and knowledge generation process (Guba, 1981; Klatt et al., 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1994; Love, 1993).

Davenport and Prusak (1998) point out that organizations "...have histories derived from people's actions and words and also express corporate values and beliefs". They feel the power of information "...comes from values, beliefs as much as, and probably more than, from information and logic" (p. 12). John Levin adds that in an interpretive view of organizations as cultures, individual members construct the cultural

reality by their diverse understandings of organizational knowledge and life (Levin, 1997). He furthermore explains that even from a functional viewpoint, "Community college cultures [are seen to be] both fulfilling organizational purpose and as expressive of organizational behaviors, including the beliefs, values, and ideologies of organizational participants" (p. 2). In the context of collaborative decision-making and evaluation, the perspective of the leadership regarding organizational beliefs and values is critical to determining the success of the evaluative act. Birnbaum (1992) supports this by arguing that this is "...because leaders are involved in interpreting...and selecting one course of action over another, they are constantly called upon to make value choices" (p.15).

Stakeholder Issues. Complicating leadership issue still further, John Dennison (1995) feels that expectations of accountability are situational or "... in the eye of the stakeholder, each of which may demand different services, performances, and outcomes (p.241). The literature argues that thriving partnerships tend to share certain defining characteristics. These include a learner-centred focus, passionate leadership, shared vision, reasonable expectations, high standard of ethics, open and clear communication, ongoing co-operation, organized planning, dedicated staff, sufficient resources, adequate administrative checks and balances, and quality evaluation (Bloom, 1997; Doughty, 1997; Kanter, 1989; Powers et al., 1988; Price, 1987; Taylor, 1997).

Th literature admits that there are difficulties with even the most inoffensive of these evaluative criteria, quality. For example, Diane Weston (1994) in *Organizational Learning as Strategy* believes that the construct of quality " ...in and of itself is

indeterminate. It is a value, an opinion" or a relative concept (p. 29). Its meaning depends upon the perceptions of the individual using the term and the context in which it is applied. Harvey and Green (1993) expand on this idea by offering five conceptualizations of quality as exceptional, perfection or consistency, fitness for purpose, value for money, or as a catalyst for transformation.

Quality, as the exceptional, implies that the user views the object being describes as distinctive, excellent, or "...passing a set of required (minimum) standards" (p.11). The distinctive notion is the most traditional concept of quality. It is also the most vague because it is not linked to any set of criteria. Excellence, on the other hand, can be criteria referenced because it simply forms the top end of any criteria scale against which all else is judged. To achieve this rating of excellence, therefore, there must be no deviation from the determinants listed. And as such, the label of excellent is virtually unattainable. A more diluted and 1990s version of excellence is quality as passing some sort of listing of minimum standards. These standards, although appearing to be value-neutral, are in fact reflective of the values, beliefs, assumptions, and motivations of vested interests because they are "...negotiated and subject to continued renegotiation in light of changed circumstances" (p.13).

The second interpretation of quality is as consistency, in which the goal is to have "zero defects" and get "...things right the first time" (p.13). This is a perspective common in input-output models, such as manufacturing, where specifications for a particular product are set and steps are taken to screen production, thereby, eliminating defects on the line. This corporate model has evolved into that of the quality culture, in which team-based units or individuals are accountable for quality in their domain. All

domains interconnect and the output of one team or individual becomes the input of the next. Thus, there are no absolute or summative standards against which the product or process is judged because each unit is assumed to have done their job and eliminated all defects before the final stage is reached.

The third perspective is that of quality as fitness for purpose, which defines a quality product or service in purely functional terms. If the product or service can do that which it was designed to do, then it is of sufficient quality. This interpretation rests on shared understanding between those creating the product or service and the end-users or consumers. For this conceptualization to be workable, the producer needs to have precise specifications from the client. These are negotiated in a specific context and adaptations made. In collaborative educational programs, the question then becomes determining who is the client, the students, or other stakeholders. "Employers...are also consumers of the product of education, whether this product is the graduates they recruit, training courses they send staff on, or research they contract out or collaborate on" (p.18). It also means trusting in the expertise of those stakeholders to know what quality means in their immediate situation and on a long-term basis. For example, "Students have very little information on which to make quality comparisons and, in practice do not draw direct links between satisfaction and quality...They may not have enough knowledge and experience to know what they need in the long term" (p.21).

In our capitalistic culture, the fourth interpretation of quality as value for money is very popular. It is closely linked to the accountability ethic. This leads to the development of benchmarks, competitive funding, performance bonuses or debits, consumer watchdog groups, and performance indicators. The issue of stakeholder

expertise, assumptions, beliefs, and values shaping unrealistic or inappropriate standards is a real concern. Also, the notion of shared understandings becomes problematic in dialogue between the educational consumer and the producer.

The fifth conceptualization of quality is as transformative catalyst. This is a classical and humanistic view of education as a liberating and individually focussed event. The individual must, therefore, judge the value of the educational experience, as he or she engages and evolves in the learning process. Harvey and Green (1993) state that in this interpretation, "Feedback from the learners is a crucial aspect of evaluation...qualitative [ly] rather than quantitative [ly]...shift [ing] the emphasis from the value-added measures of enhancement to empowerment" (p.25).

Leaders, who aim for quality programming and quality evaluation must, therefore, discern these terms through the multiple opinions or lenses of the stakeholder audience in a specific contextual framework. This is a search for reasonable understanding not absolute agreement. Weick's (1995) philosophy contends that this is a tremendously difficult act as individual perceptions are "...about accounts that are socially acceptable and credible [because]...in an equivocal, postmodern world, infused with the politics of interpretation, ...conflicting interests, ...multiple shifting identities, accuracy seems fruitless, and not of much practical help, either" (p.61). Although, standards for quality are jointly developed, there may still be ongoing difficulties. Corporate and college mandates, leadership styles, hierarchies of power, accountability structures, employee-expectations and roles, communication styles and even vocabulary, and decision-making, planning and implementation norms are quite distinct from one another and complicate such partnership issues enormously (Doughty, 1997; Gerlach, 1992; Knowles, 1995).

The best leaders can do is to be hypersensitive to these differences and act to ameliorate frustrations and build understanding about collaborative norms, particularly those related to evaluating quality and progress (Cortada, 1998). Covey describes this dialogue as the cornerstone of understanding:

> Perhaps most powerful principal of all human interaction is genuinely seeking to understand another deeply before being understood in return. At the root of all interpersonal problems is failure to thoroughly understand each other. We misunderstand and therefore mistrust. ...True and pathetic communication shares faithfully not only words, ideas, and information, but also feelings, emotions, and sensitivities" (p. 272).

This insight includes being cognizant of the deep meaning and implications of any recommendations, as well as, all essential relationships between them, and how best to communicate their understandings effectively to the others, especially senior management and boards of directors or trustees. This is vital since knowledge is as Gallagan (1997) explains "...useless [unless you can]...present it to others clearly"(p.24). In partnerships, the corporate and educational leaders are the organizers; they design a framework for data and information organization for specific purposes (Grob, 1992). It is a given that the senior administration of the organization has delegated to and assumes that the leaders will perform this management duty (Cohen & Brawer, 1994). Thus the legitimate leaders' evaluative goals and objectives decide what, when, where, and how data are gathered. Tumblin (1997) affirms this saying that, " Decision makers will intentionally ask ... a priori questions" (p.133).

Once the data are collected, the transformation of these facts and statistics to information can be accomplished in a variety of ways; each method requires some degree of the partnering leadership's approval, intervention, and direction. This is a dynamic process, which Tumblin (1997) feels "...could change as the decision event continues" (p.134). For example, partnership leaders may require that facts and statistics, collected on a partnership, be formatted and integrated into a specific evaluative event, such as a written report. They may direct how the data being collected will be categorized, analyzed statistically, condensed, or modified for further use in ongoing evaluation. By applying this added level of meaning or organizational framework to the neutral data, the leaders of the community college and business-industry partnership are in fact transforming that data. The resulting information is colored with the values, assumptions, beliefs, motivations, and knowledge of the leadership (Davenport & Prusak, 1998).

Despite its inherent subjectivity, stakeholder audiences, especially senior management, must have timely, accurate, and appropriately packaged insights about the partnership to perform their legitimate roles effectively. These include internal policy development, lobbying for favourable external policy and political concessions, public relations, fund raising or marketing, and other networking for the good of the organization, as a whole (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Gallagan, 1997; Grob, 1992; Powers et al., 1988). To service these stakeholders, Tumblin (1997) says the leader-evaluator must realize that it "...is not the decision that is difficult - it is [seeing] the consequences of the decision" (p.9). Partnership leaders need to anticipate what is needed and how it will be used to best ameliorate knowledge-users' frustrations, reduce the possibility of harm, and

enhance positive consequences, as perceived by the stakeholders, especially senior administration.

Robert Birnbaum's (1992) exploration of the service side of leadership speaks to the complexity of this evaluative role; his model leader must be able to meet "the needs of multiple and conflicting stakeholders" (p. 56). These needs include satisfying and being accountable to a diverse audience. This stakeholder list may include the respective business or educational partners; present and potential students; internal peers; subordinates; senior management, which include the boards of directors or trustees; and the community.

This last item may be expanded to embrace special interest groups such as: program advisory groups; concerned local ethnic, religious, or service organizations; apprenticeship, trade union, or professional organizations; competitive or secondary providers, industries or businesses; transfer institutions; boards of directors and trustees as public representatives; and local, provincial, or federal government departments or agencies (Dennison, 1995). The list for each partnership is unique to its own special situational context, but all community college and corporate partnerships must be aware of and responsive to the natural complexities in which they operate. The role of the leader is an important one for his or her delivery alone can influence the attention paid and possible usefulness as Marsick and Neaman (1996) observe, "The fruits of learning are typically valued more when they come from those who have more status, power, or influence (p. 102).

Leadership Roles and Responsibilities. In *Accountability: Getting a grip on results* (1998) Klatt et al. (1998) define accountability as "...first and foremost a personal commitment, to the organization and to those the organization serves" (p.9). All knowledge production, including evaluative, is directive. Someone has to initiate, control, synthesize, and interpret, as well as, follow through on evaluation and its products (Allen, 1996; Davenport & Prusak, 1998). These considerations make the knowledge generation in accountability and evaluation a management issue (Bensimon, 1994; Grob, 1992). Typically, in community college and corporate partnerships, the formally recognized, partnership leaders serve this management role (Powers, Betz, & Aslanian, 1988). Their positions, as deans or chairpersons and managers, supervisors, or coordinators, give them a legitimate power base and responsibility set within their organizations and the collaboration (Birnbaum, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994). They are the "faces" of their respective organizations at the partnership table and the "voice" or interpreter of the coalition back to their home institutions.

Leaders must evaluate to support planning, decision making, and ensure that: adequate resources, especially support personnel and space are provided. Evaluation also helps determine that staffing is adequate and teaching methodologies and delivery formats are appropriate. Assessment safeguards confidentiality and participants' satisfaction or productivity. Furthermore, it builds shared understandings that may be embodied in formalized agreements, such as contracts, memorandum of understanding, mission statements, or business plans (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997). This will help program planning and implementation and reduce the number or severity of potential disagreements.

Contemporary organizations demand that their collaborative leaders are participatory and accountable in many, if not all, these areas. They expect them to use their expertise, as coordinators, administrators, facilitators, managers, sensemakers, and evaluators to gain new insights. This is more than simply bandaging identified problems without seeking an understanding of the issues that were behind the issues. As Peter Senge (1997) describes it, the expectation is for leaders to seek "...deeper understandings rather than striking out to 'fix' problem symptoms -because they know most fixes are temporary at best, and often result in more severe problems later" (p. 18).

These deep understandings are assets that can contribute to the organizational knowledge base (Davenport & Prusak, 1995; Fenwick, 1996). This management philosophy supports change, risk taking, and even failure as learning opportunities and encourages flexibility and increased options for effective decision making (Fritz, 1991; Harris, 1996; Harwood, 1991; Kanter, 1989, 1995; Peters, 1988; Staniforth, 1997). Kanter (1989) states that, " The formation of partnership almost by definition calls for participative skills - gathering information, resisting preconceived ideas, listening to others, testing assumptions, seeking consensus" (p.154).

In this capacity, partnership leaders may be considered what Jack Stewart refers to as the fixer-facilitator-negotiators (Stewart, 1997). They are the active component of management that moves decisively in the partnership. These individuals are literally the conduits through which organizational power, originating from and sanctioned by senior management and boards of directors or trustees, flows into the partnership and fuels collaborative programming initiatives (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Powers et al., 1988).

As those designated accountable for program quality, these leader-evaluators are critical decision-makers, ensuring program success (Bloom, 1993; Knowles, 1995; Tumblin, 1997).

To fulfil this responsibility, leaders must be master communicators, for as Marsick and Neaman (1996) point out organizational members, "...must be skilful in the way in which they communicate and challenge the thinking of others. Ground rules an expectations for these kinds of conversations are themselves influenced by prior socialization, which typically has occurred under command and control hierarchy that inhibits open challenge (p. 102).

Leaders must build trust to serve stakeholder needs. In particular, the literature affirms the importance of the corporate and educational leaders' relationship with each other. Many view it as the "load-bearing" member of this knowledge-generating framework. Karen Hanson (1998) quotes Dr. Carol Schutte, Program Manager of the US National Institute of Standards and Technology explaining, "...[partnership] leaders need to learn how well they can work together" as a key criterion for exemplary partnership (p.5). Stewart (1997) feels that the human relationship is critical to the promotion of any organizational learning because "...personal influence is more powerful than memos or reports" (p. 43), in part because all organizations are political entities. In *Managing Community Colleges* (1994), Estela Bensimon describes the political frame of leadership as one where decision making arises " ...from bargaining, influencing, and coalition building" (p.26). Therefore from her stance, as effective political leaders, they should develop and nurture quality relationships within and outside of their organizations, which contribute to their program.

Applying Harris' (1996) perspective to this discussion helps distinguish management from leadership in college-corporate collaboration and evaluation. Managers will make decisions on a need-to basis, evaluating only on request or when a problem demands immediate attention. They are efficiency and instrument-oriented. (Jackson, 1996) quotes Mintzberg's (1972) definition, that the "... prime purpose of the manager is to ensure... the efficient production of goods and services" (p. 45). In contrast, leaders ask critical questions, look at the big picture, seek effectiveness over efficiency, and most importantly anticipate; this is most vital in times of change and challenge (Birnbaum, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Covey, 1990). This notion is similar to that put forth by Tara Fenwick (1996), who in describing a learning organization, talks of the need to "think 'big picture'...and to help people to understand and work with each other" (p.6). Leaders are expected to model such behavior, as Marsick & Watkins (1996), explain by "...support[ing] learning at the individual, team, and organizational levels" (p.18).

Evaluative Choices

A common understanding of evaluation is not found in the literature; the meaning of this term is situational with interpretations varying to suit to specific circumstances and evaluator/stakeholder preferences. It, therefore, can employ a multitude of divergent strategies and instruments (American Evaluation Association, 1994; Caffarella, 1994; Chen, 1996; Gardiner, 1994; House, 1994; Ory, 1994; Worthen & Sanders, 1994).

Internal versus External. Internal evaluation is an activity, which requires individuals within the organization, which has a substantive stake in the program, to assess that same program (Love, 1993). In contrast, external evaluation is an assessment activity that requires individuals, who are independent of the program to evaluate the status, progress, or quality of the program. It traditionally involves the use of professionally trained evaluation experts (AEA, 1995). Internal evaluators are typically not formally trained in evaluation techniques, and therefore may possess varying degrees of evaluative skills and knowledge (Gardner, 1994).

The move towards internal evaluation over the decade is necessitated by fiscal restraints, decentralization policies, changing philosophies of evaluation, increased stakeholder power, and changes in organizational management theory and practice. Internal evaluation is potentially more cost effective and convenient than external evaluation. Also, it may promote communication amongst the stakeholders. This may lead to greater organizational buy-in and trust. The downside may include potential bias, lack of stakeholder confidence in the results, incompetence, and leadership stress (Dennison, 1995; Love, 1993). It is a balancing act to use instruments and strategies that provide accurate data and information without consuming undo resources, as well as, distracting leaders and other partnership members from the essential tasks of the partnership program (Weston, 1994).

In internal evaluation, individuals must employ some discretion in assessing which instruments and strategies will serve their situational needs. For leaders of collaborative programs, time is a very real issue. "Most organizational action is time sensitive, which means that in a speed/accuracy trade-off, managers favor speed" (Weick,

1994, p. 57). Another concern is the richness and realism of the data collected. Many investigators opt for qualitative approaches, despite its classic weaknesses (Bogdan & Bilkin, 1992; Chadwick, Bahr, & Albrecht, 1984; Fowler, 1993; Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). For example, Weston (1994) points out that, while many feel that decisions grounded in evaluative knowledge gathered through purely qualitative strategies may reflect personal bias, "they make an important contribution to understanding" (p. 28). Defining evaluative criteria can counteract this concern, as leaders define quality and success, clarify evaluative measures they plan to use, and explain these to data collectors and users.

Informal versus Formal. Formal and informal assessment approaches exist on a continuum. At one end of the scale are highly formalized activities, which are mandated and systematic. These typically have more prescriptive instruments with data collection, analysis, and reporting protocols designed to enhance the perception of investigative rigor in determining the quality, merit or status of a phenomenon (Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1994). Other formal examinations are less prescriptive, but are still publicly authorized, scheduled, and largely methodical in design. Examples of formal evaluation may include: meetings, wherein specific feedback is systematically collected or shared, such as program advisory, focus, or management group meetings; standardized collection of statistics and information, such as oral, written, or skill-based examinations; data and information systematically collected, categorized, and interpreted by external or internal individuals, who are not the course instructors, such as enrolment and retention statistics

collected by human resources or registration offices and professional associations or graduate survey data.

At the opposite end of the continuum are informal approaches for collaborative evaluation. These forms of assessment were ongoing and casual evaluative processes through which the leaders made sense about an aspect of the quality, status, or progress of a program. These serendipitous activities were subjectivist, intuitive, and pluralistic. Informal evaluation is an important and presumed part of project leadership (Covey, 1991; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Peters, 1987; Weick, 1995; Worthen & Sanders, 1994). These informal, activities may include spontaneous moments in which problems or moments of interruption in the programming processes are recognized and selected for further study; social conversations with stakeholders, in which unintentional feedback is given; unforeseen public acknowledgement, such as receiving explicit feedback in a forum designed with another agenda or receiving an award for excellence; unanticipated inferences from a secondary source, such as an unexpected link between employers' productivity and graduates' interpersonal skills and attitudes in a technical skill-based program; anecdotal reports, such listening to the feelings and perceptions expressed in a spontaneous telephone call from a student; and casual observation, such as dropping into a class session and watching instruction or serendipitously seeing a student apply theoretical knowledge learned in a practical and productive way at the job site.

Qualitative versus Quantitative. Qualitative approaches aim to gather a body of knowledge about the phenomenon under consideration from the perspective of the person involved in that phenomenon (Chadwick, Bahr, & Albrecht, 1984; Fowler, 1993; Gall,

Borg, & Gall, 1996). The investigator seeks to understand the phenomenon through the eyes of the participant and share his or her unique and contextualized insight with others. Consequently, transferability and not generalizability is the goal of qualitative research. The researcher must add contextual richness and clarify meanings in order to make the phenomenon and its context truthful for the reader, so that he or she can make sense of the experiences and understandings revealed and decide how pertinent findings are to his or her own situation. The power of a qualitative investigation rests on the researcher's ability to honestly reflect the world of the subject to the readers to allow them to decide what is meaningful and, therefore, transferable (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Statistical analysis of numerical data is not performed in purely qualitative investigations. Qualitative approaches may include interviewing (unstructured, semi-structured, or structured), observation (unstructured, semi-structured, or structured), ethnographic studies, text analysis, historical narratives, or pictorial documentary.

Quantitative approaches are designed to collect data that may be expressed in a numerical format for statistical analysis, using a variety of mathematical formulae to determine the usefulness of the investigative results. Standardized tests, numerically scaled surveys, frequency counts, scaled performance testing, and product analysis against numerical specifications, are all examples of quantitative approaches. Generalizability from a defined sample frame to a larger population is the goal of quantitative research. Therefore, great care is paid to defining all investigative criteria.

Corporate and Academic Perspectives on Evaluation

There is a body of literature on training and development evaluation, as well as, academic program evaluation. The contemporary corporate literature draws on some of the latter. That academic theory supports the notion that qualitative or quantitative, formative or summative, and external or internal evaluation are all valid dependent on the users' needs, values, beliefs, and skills. This section will explore some of the parallels and contrasts between the two.

Training and Development Models of Evaluation. The most common evaluative model used in North American collaborative training and development programming is the Kirkpatrick (1967). Gerber (1995) describes it as a prescriptive, four stage evaluative system that is seldom used in its entirety. She comments that the last two levels, which check transferability and training impact on the bottom line respectively, are " ...reserved for large, high profile initiatives or ones in which the stakeholders demand evidence of results" (p.31). Level four relies heavily on quantitative data, the purpose of which is to, as Robert Masten (1995) states, "...to indicate when things are not right, and [lead investigators to] the subsequent, 'Why?' " (p.437). Level three is mainly qualitative.

The other lower levels are much more commonly used. Level one is the most frequent form of evaluation done in business training. It uses course evaluation sheets to check learner satisfaction, usually employing some combination of scaled, multiple choice, and short answer response. This level one evaluation is an important process for business educators, since "...Trainees, who are put off by some aspect of the course design, are unlikely to ingest the learning points you've so carefully put in their

trough"(p. 28). Level two is a competency check, via either a formal examination or a skill demonstration. It is most commonly used in accreditation situations, where a professional designation, diploma, or certificate is awarded on the passing of minimum performance criteria. This form of evaluation relies on an expert opinion for validation of the performance (written, oral, or physical) observed.

Kaufman et al. (1995) extend and modify this framework to include a fifth level, which looks at "...social & client responsiveness, contributions, and payoffs"(p.12), above and beyond measures of organizational inputs and outputs, transference, individual competency, learner satisfaction, and program efficiencies. They also urge that evaluators look at their own purposes, values, and assumptions in crafting evaluation strategies to " ...compare results with intentions...[in order to]...move toward the required results (p.9).

Other corporate literature, which speaks to evaluation, interprets the term in an informal perspective, using evaluation as a personal learning linked to sensemaking. The leaders note something that casually catches their attention. They responded to the cues in their environment and relate what they observed to their project. They judge whether to investigate further, and if they do, they collect information and data to create knowledge. Marsick and Neaman (1996) argue that this cycle is learning.

> ...Filtering...information through...selective perception, values, beliefs, and framing of the situation, ...review[ing]...results, ...digging for the real reasons behind both intended and unintended consequences [and], ...selectively make[ing] meaning of the experience (p.100).

This evaluative process is seen as an important part of leadership in a contemporary corporate structure. It makes the individual able to respond to changes effectively and efficiently. The goal of a learning organization is to spread this leadership and evaluative learning throughout the organization to create a culture of quality and innovation (Institute for Public Policy, 1991; Mariotti, 1997; Peters, 1988; Staniforth, 1997).

Academic Program Evaluation. Program evaluation is a professional discipline, requiring specific skills, attitudes, and knowledge (AEA, 1995). It is a purposeful examination of a program to create organizational knowledge about the progress, productivity, quality, viability, and status of a particular educational program (Chen, 1996; Conrad & Wilson, 1994; House, 1994; Madaus et al., 1994; Ory, 1994). It may include training and development evaluation models reviewed, but it is not limited to them. There are multiple evaluative approaches, including Objectives-based Review, Systems Evaluation, Case Study, Quasi-legal Evaluation, Professional or Expert Review, and the Kirkpatrick or Multi-levels of Evaluation Review. The most common of these used for academic programming is the Kirkpatrick, followed by the Objectives-based Review (Caffarella, 1994).

The choice of model is related to purpose; evaluator preference, experience, and knowledge; type or accessibility of resources needed; ease of data collection and analysis; burden of proof for objectivity and credibility required; overall listing of outcomes desired; feedback format to suit specific stakeholder needs; nature or scope of the phenomenon under study; expectations of audience involvement; time constraints; political agendas in operation; and flexibility desired. All have distinct advantages and

disadvantages depending on the importance and interplay of each factor in the particular context (Personal communication, Dr. Paula Brook, July 13, 1998). And all may select from a diverse array of techniques, including observation, interviews, written questionnaires, tests, product reviews, performance reviews, records or documentation review, portfolios, or cost-benefit analysis.

Caffarella (1994) offers a concise summary of the key academic evaluation approaches. The Objectives-based Review approach is a form of evaluation, which examines the program's performance against the established objectives and goals. These are generally focussed on learning witnessed and transferred as a result of the program experience. The Systems Evaluation compares particular organizational systems' usage and expenditures against programming outputs and benefits (Alfred, 1991). The Case Study approach is an in-depth qualitative investigation of the holistic program experience from primary stakeholders' own perspectives. It is concerned with key reflections about participants' values, assumptions, and beliefs in relation to their experiences in or with the program. The Quasi-legal Evaluation approach uses "adversarial hearings...presented in a legalistic fashion" (p127) to come up with a concise statement on program quality, as well as, specific recommendations on the future of the offering. The Professional or Expert Review approach uses one or more experts to made a professional assessment of the quality and value of a program against a set of pre-defined criteria, often including program objectives and goals or product and skill competency specifications.

Evaluations are used for both formative or continuous improvement of a program and summative or final assessment purposes. Information or data in program evaluation are collected generally by formal or more systematic means. The knowledge created

from these was used either for decision-making regarding: assessment of congruence between performance and objectives, the nature of program, assessment of the program's worth or quality, policy development, or comparative purposes (Conrad & Wilson, 1994; Gardiner, 1994). This can be a process with significant ramifications. Cosgrove and Speed (1995) explain that such decisions should enable those in authority "...to stop on a dime, make hairpin turns, and from time to time dismantle ...and reinvent [the program] in another form, one that better serves the new strategic priorities -whatever they may be" (p.58). It may also be used to fulfil accountability requirements internally or externally or promotion or as a catalyst for organizational learning (Caffarella, 1994).

Evaluation as Knowledge Creation. It is important to situate the process of evaluation within the broader spectrum of organizational knowledge building, as all forms of evaluation are learning experiences. Allen (1997) supports this perspective saying, " Evaluation is a process...which enables insights, direction and details of learning to be clearly linked to the effective working of the organization" (p. 82). When done well, evaluation can contribute to the collective knowledge base, and as a result, can influence the organization skills, attitudes, and wisdom. Love (1993), Kanter (1989), Klatt et al., (1998), Mariotti (1997), Nonaka (1991), and Peters (1988) believe that this knowledge creation process is transformative. It is a cyclical, ongoing process demanding a perceptive, involved, and committed leadership. Applying this perspective to evaluation and partnership means that inevitably and hopefully positively each organization can learn and, therefore, change through their participation in the collaboration and evaluation. Saltiel (1998) says collaborative partnership "...provides

the power to transform ordinary learning experiences into dynamic relationships, resulting in a synergistic process of accomplishment" (p. 5). "Consequently, evaluation is a tool; it is a resource to serve stakeholder needs and improve program quality (Stufflebeam, 1983), but it is also a learning experience that produces organizational knowledge, which can lead to long-term structural, procedural, and contextual renewal (American Evaluation Society, 1995).

Knowledge production, as that which occurs in evaluation, is a hierarchical process. Data is transformed into information, and information is subsequently internalized by collaborating leaders to become evaluative knowledge. It begins with facts and statistics, known as data. These statistics or facts are value-neutral; they are not interpretative or directional. They may support decision-making related to the evaluative activity, but they do not lead decision-making or, indeed, comprise evaluation in themselves. In assessing a specific partnership program, the leadership must simplify the mass of data into evaluative information. Davenport and Prusak (1998) explain that "[Information] is a message...it has a sender and receiver. Information is meant to change the way to receiver perceives something, to have an impact on his judgment and his behavior. [Information is] data that makes a difference" (p.3). Thus, information is not so much about extracting absolute truth or accuracy with data, as it is concerned with gaining a useful and plausible appreciation of what was observed. The leader's conception of what useful means is dependent on the circumstances, especially the urgency of his or her need to act. Weick (1995) supports this stance arguing that:

> Accurate perceptions...immobilize. People who want to get into action tend to simplify rather than elaborate. ...Bold action is adaptive because

> its opposite, deliberation, is futile in a changing world where perceptions, by definition, can never be accurate. They can never be accurate because, by the time people notice and name something, it has become something else and no longer exists (p.60).

The last step is knowledge creation. Because the last stage in evaluation occurs within the mind of the evaluator, the generation of evaluative knowledge is ultimately a subjective act (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). In more casual or qualitative forms of evaluation, the process becomes akin to sensemaking:

> It is a continuous alternation between particulars and explanations, with each cycle giving added form and substance to the other. It is about building confidence as the particulars begin to cohere and as the explanation allows increasingly accurate deductions" (Weick, 1995, p.133).

In this dynamic and subjective process, the leader alternately looks inward and outward, hoping to make sense of the phenomenon through retrospective reflection.

The Leader as Evaluator

Contemporary leadership literature describes leaders as those, who "...monitor effectiveness, ...nurture, develop, ...[and] monitor the growth of the intellectual capital of the firm (Marsick & Watkins, 1996, p.20). They are actively involved in all phases of the learning process, as models, facilitators, and evaluators. From the constructivist stance of Lincoln and Guba (1989), one would describe program leaders as internal, qualitative evaluators, who are "...subjective partners with stakeholders in the literal creation of evaluative [knowledge]" (p.110). They are participants in the phenomenon

that they wish to study, and, therefore, their evaluation is a collaborative and political learning process. Using their skills and knowledge to maintain trustworthiness, they help sense and name the evaluative truth about the phenomenon, which emerges from the data (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1989).

Ultimately, their ability to transform information into evaluative knowledge helps define the leaders as individual, experiential learners. While in-house accountability practices and procedures can attempt to direct and support this transformation, evaluative knowledge creation is a personal endeavor (Nonaka, 1991). As Davenport and Prusak (1998) state, "If information is to become knowledge, then humans must do virtually all the work" (p. 6). For the leaders as evaluators, this knowledge creation is a circular journey, which begins with evaluation and decision-making, and culminates in implementation. This process offers unique challenges and responsibilities for leadership.

Many authors have attempted to catagorize the personal attributes required to fulfil this side of leadership. For example, Thomas Tumblin counts objectivity, empathy, a sense of fair play, persistence, acceptance, as well as, synthesis, planning, critical thinking and decision making skills (Tumblin, 1997). Cohen and Brawer envision postsecondary leaders possessing a sense of organizational vision and commitment and a respect for individuality, coupled with superb communication, evaluation, divergent thinking, and teambuilding skills (Cohen & Brawer, 1994). Many of these soft attributes overlap with what some authors refer to as moral values or ethics. In business literature, this attention to character is seen as a part of leadership, especially in flatter organizational structures, where administrative practices reflect individual values and

actions (Price, 1987). The ability of team mates to trust hinges on their faith in the character of the individual in charge (Covey, 1990). This was supported by Byrd (1996), who maintained that "We must treat our partners and each other with absolute integrity... [to] maintain the trust that is needed when sharing knowledge and information. [It] is considered in virtually every business decision made (p.480).

In the list of soft skills, one term appears over and over again in the sea of leadership literature - adaptability. In *Adaptive Organizations and People: A literature survey for the task force on workforce adaptation in the public service 2000* (1991), the Canadian government, defines adaptiveness as an, "...internal capacity to learn, organize, to cope in a changing environment" (p.2). It describes adaptive leaders as problem solvers, who are self-motivated and curious (Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1991). Mariotti (1997) supports this, saying that, "New knowledge often comes from unexpected sources. ...Accidents combined with childlike curiosity lead us to wonder why and not accept the conventional wisdom" (p. 263). Therefore adaptive leaders [actively]"look for discontinuities, things outside the current pattern, things that 'should' work, but don't" (p.22). This action is very much akin to Karl Weick's concept of sensemaking:

> To talk about sensemaking is to talk about reality as an ongoing accomplishment that takes form when people make retrospective sense of situations in which they find themselves and their creations. There is a strong reflexive quality to this process. People make sense of things by seeing a world on which they have already imposed what they believe (p.15).

In this interpretation, making sense of any aspect of a project would require that the observer is able to judge what constitutes an interruption in the pre-determined flow of events in the life of a program. It also would assume that they could learn over time what potential barriers might typically emerge. Being able to make sense in a collaborative program, therefore, involves evaluation, and is motivated by accountability and a desire to boost program quality (Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1991).

Within the democratized cultures of Canadian community colleges, entrepreneurial leaders also need superb communication skills to make sense of situations and build evaluative knowledge (Knowles, 1995). "Information is created anew every time we bring people together. Diversity of perspective adds to this richness" (Mariotti, 1997).

Knowledge creation demands a comparison of new information with other new or older information; sees new patterns in and between information; and most importantly, integrates opinions and judgements of others (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). Ikujiro Nonaka (1991) explains that creating new knowledge "...depends on tapping the tacit and often highly subjective insights, intuitions, and hunches of individual employees and making those insights available for...use by the company as a whole" (p. 97). Covey (1990) advises those in authority to "Operate with the assumption that you cannot have all the answers, all the insights, and value the different viewpoints, judgments, and experiences that followers have" (p. 107). Therefore, communication (face to face, electronic, telephone, and written) between the partnership leaders, programming staff, respective administrators, students, and other stakeholders can add depth and breadth to

the knowledge base. This two-way, open dialogue was supported in partnership literature by Kanter (1989) and Powers et al.(1988).

Davenport and Prusak (1998) contend that effective leaders "...making difficult decisions are much more likely to go to people they respect and avail themselves of their knowledge than they are to look for information in databases. Studies have shown that managers get two-thirds of their information and knowledge from...conversations. Only one-third comes from documents" (p. 12). The logic behind this observation is that the individual expert has synthesized a richer and more useful product than that held in raw data and information. By communicating with the knowledge-seller, the buyer gains much more than when he or she could obtain if dealing via print or from some secondary sources. Harris (1996) agrees, saying, "It is the relationship that governs, organizes, entices, and excites performance into existence" (p. 47). Nonaka points out an essential argument in the debate by saying that the leader, as a middle manager, "...synthesizes the tacit knowledge of both frontline employees and senior executives, make it explicit, and incorporate it...In this respect, they are the true 'knowledge engineers' of the knowledge-creating company" (p. 104). They are the mainline conduits of knowledge in, through, and out of the collaborative program.

To do this communication role effectively and efficiently, they utilize technical skills and knowledge to collect and manage data, transfer knowledge and information to stakeholders, as well as, fulfil other leadership duties. As Bassi (1997) lists, the software and hardware expertise of contemporary leadership can be extensive:

> Most knowledge management systems rely heavily on such tools as Lotus Notes, Intranets, electronic performance support systems, and specialized software.

They provide an electronic way so people can share information, best practices, directories of experts, and so forth systematically -with the ultimate intent to create and disseminate knowledge (p.26).

But most importantly, they talk face-to-face and one-on-one moving throughout their domain , selecting, interpreting, synthesizing, and sharing from what they sense.

Thomas Tumblin in his dissertation, *Image Theory and Decision-Making in High Education*, maintains that information seeking is a conscious act, which both necessitates and feeds decision-making (Tumblin, 1997). He even contends that not making a decision "implies a decision" (p.1). In his research study, which applies Image paradigm to higher education, Tumblin describes decision making by employees within an organizational framework as a personal effort to add to the knowledge base of the collective whole. It "...occurs within the individual members of the group" (p.4). As Lee Roy Beech, quoted in Tumblin's treatise, says that decision making is "...the mechanism by which the need for abandoning the status quo is evaluated and, if change is needed, the means by which a new direction is selected" (p. 7). Beech's perspective of decision making, as an evaluative process is logical in the light of modern accountability theory because the decision-making responsibilities, assumed by the individual partnership leader, as organizational agents, are a natural outgrowth of modern accountability theory.

To appreciate the implications of this perspective to evaluation, one must recognize that the community college and business-industry partnership leaders are their organizations' experts on the collaborative programming. Expertise is a significant component of adult intelligence; practical or functional intelligence, when applied to

specific area of work or knowledge, is called expertise or wisdom. People possessing expertise typically have a rich understanding of their domain; are qualitative analysts viewing quality and problems holistically; are keen self-evaluators and meta-evaluators; are interpreters, able to see significant patterns by re-organizing collected information and facts; are efficient, intuitive evaluators and sensemakers, problem-seers, and solvers in their area of expertise; picture problems more abstractly than do novice decision makers; and are able to draw on their memories to apply their insights in novel and useful ways (Pogson, 1995; Mariotti, 1997). Davenport and Prusak (1998) point out the root of the word "expert" is a Latin verb, which means, "to be put to the test." Using their interpretation, the community college and business-industry leaders have become the people with the deepest evaluative knowledge of the partnership in their organizations.

As such, their knowledge has been tested in the field, and they have been personally educated by their experiences. For example, they are likely to have the broadest historical perspective of the partnership. As such they should be the first to vision evaluatively, looking for patterns, recognizing weaknesses or strengths, and formulating action plans to safeguard the partnership. They are, as Jim Harris (1996) defines leadership, "problem-seeing, not [just] problem-solving" (p.35). Furthermore, they ideally possess, what the US Army in Davenport and Prusak (1998) calls, "the rich truth of real situations experienced close-up: on the ground, rather than from the heights of theory or generalization" (p. 8). Their ability to see opportunities for evaluative learning and communicate this wisdom is what makes them so valuable to the partnership and their organizations. They are knowledge-sellers, who are consulted by others in the

organization, as one of the few " knowledgeable people [sought] when ...expert advice on a particular subject [is needed]" (Davenport & Prusak, 1998, p.12).

The wisdom of the knowledge expert, which in collaborative ventures is the partnership leader, should enable him or her to "size up the situation quickly without going through definable process or even sometimes been able to explain their reasoning" (Davenport & Prusak, 1998, p. 11). Karl Weick (1995), in *Sensemaking in Organizations,* calls this leadership insight, compressed expertise. In applying his theory to partnership evaluation, one could accept that the exemplary leaders possess the knowledge and experience to intuitively understand data and information in context and ask good questions for decision making. Weick (1994) explains that in Japanese management "making a decision" is not finding an answer but "...defining the question." The important and crucial steps are to decide whether there is a need for a decision and what the decision is about. (p. 467). To accomplish this, sensemaking leaders perform informal evaluative acts, such as casual observations, maintenance of mental checklists, ongoing and unplanned multitask monitoring, and conversational interviews, almost without conscious effort. That sense of "with-it-ness" is reflected in their confident ability to delegate and still be cognizant of more technical evaluative work, such as data collection (Allen, 1997).

Leaders in learning organizations understand that the more one knows, the better decisions typically one can make (Davenport & Prusak, 1998); "Knowledge is aware of what it doesn't know. Being both certain and wrong is a common occurrence. Many...have pointed out that the more knowledgeable one becomes the more humble one feels about what one knows" (Davenport & Prusak, 1998, p. 10). Jim Harris, in *The*

Learning Paradox: Creating new security by thriving and uncertainty, asserts that organizational security can be assured only by this ongoing evaluation, searching for knowledge, and a recognizing that responding to change and living with complexity and uncertainty are norms (Harris, 1996).

Applications of Organizational Knowledge

Organizational knowledge is action-oriented, Davenport and Prusak (1998) contend that it is a valuable organizational asset, which "...can provide a sustainable advantage. Knowledge assets increase with use. Ideas breed new ideas, and shared knowledge stays with the giver while it enriches the receiver" (p.17). Business and industry have embraced the concept of organizational learning because "In an economy where the only certainty is uncertainty, the one sure source of lasting competitive advantage is knowledge" (Nonaka, 1991, p. 96).

Evaluative knowledge is witnessed in the post-decision-making and implementation, as partnership leaders and stakeholders evaluate and respond to that knowledge (Bloom, 1993; Stufflebeam & Webster, 1997). This is because "People just don't passively receive new knowledge, they actively interpret it to fit their own situation and perspective" (Nonaka, 1991, p. 103). In this way, evaluation generates new knowledge, which in turn leads to deeper understanding and still more knowledge creation by the collaborative leadership.

Therefore, the worth of evaluative knowledge should be judged by how it useful it is when applied in the context of the partnership (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1997). The organizational knowledge is measured by the quality and effectiveness of the outcomes

implemented, or how changes made add to the quality of the program. The program in turn is judged by how that it adds to the quality of the institution on a short-term economic basis, and in terms of long term organizational capability or wisdom to offset contextual challenge.

> It cannot be said enough: Change is the one immutable fact of life. Knowledge grows. ...The information available to us is expanding at unprecedented rates. Alone it is like a huge well of the freshest water. ...Add human insight to information, and it turns into a magical potion called knowledge. ...Combine this knowledge with experience and we achieve that elusive quality called wisdom (Mariotti, 1997, p. 266).

The value of this expertise is incalculable because it is impossible to catalogue its depth or breadth and measure how each facet of wisdom influences the ecology of those people and organizations, with which the owner of the expertise interacts. What is certain is that such knowledge bring its bearer distinct advantages in organizational life for as Peters (1988) says, "Knowledge is power - it always has been; it always will be" (p. 505).

Summary

Accountability is a modern organizational ethic, widely accepted and promoted by government and society as a whole (Barnetson, 1999; Government of Alberta, 1996b; Klatt et al., 1998). Post-modern program evaluation is one such adjunct to accountability, a resource to serve stakeholder needs and improve program quality (Stufflebeam, 1983). It, like other forms of evaluation, produces organizational

knowledge for decisions making, leading to recommendations, which direct policies and procedures, as well as, influence future program planning (American Evaluation Society, 1995; Gardner, 1994). Such evaluation may have formative or summative elements, implicit or explicit natures, informal or formal styles, quantitative or qualitative components, be internally or externally administered, and cater to diverse stakeholders (Chen, 1996; Grob, 1992; Love, 1993; Scriven, 1991; Stufflebeam, 1983). All produce knowledge for decision making by the leaders of the partnership (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Tumblin, 1997).

This literature review concludes that evaluation is a facet of accountability. It involves the purposeful reflection and decision making of individuals. Program evaluation is a way to support and verify collaborative program quality, and it is a recognized component of quality partnership planning and implementation (Bloom, 1993; Harvey & Dutton, 1998). In the accountability-driven climate of the 90's, partnership leaders are expected to evaluate. This knowledge generation is a function of and helps define their leadership role. The resultant insights feed the organizational knowledge base; their experiences may enhance the internal evaluative capacity of the organization and promote partnership quality.

Since as Knowles (1995) concludes, "...there is very little published research on the [entrepreneurial] experiences of Canadian colleges...and [it] will increasingly permeate all spheres of college activity" (p.204), it is critical that the perspectives of current partnership leaders on the role of evaluation to partnership quality be examined. Investigating partnerships between business-industry and community colleges will help preserve the work and ideas of current collaborators. The history of Canadian

community college and business-industry partnerships is a recent one; lessons learned from the experience of these knowledge experts can lead to more effective strategic planning and greatly increase the potential for success in future partnership ventures (Jackson, 1996).

Chapter Three: Research Method

This chapter outlines in detail the following: (a) the approach, (b) the design, (c) sample, (d) the consent and confidentiality, (e) the data collection, (f) the data analysis, and (g) the trustworthiness of the data.

Approach

This qualitative study explores the perceptions of corporate and college partnership leaders as they reflect on evaluation, organizational knowledge, and collaborative program quality. To develop a deep understanding of context of each individual leader, a descriptive and interpretive qualitative approach was used. The goal was to gather a body of knowledge about the phenomenon of partnership programming from the perspective of the corporate or community college leader, as the person involved in that phenomenon.

Participants were asked to take part in a one-hour, semi-structured interview. The actual interviews varied from sixty to one hundred and thirty minutes. These interviews were held either face to face or by telephone. The methodology for survey research, including interviewing, is widely used in qualitative research, and standards for its practice are well defined. These norms include well established guidelines for enhancing the reliability and validity of data obtained through interviewing, either face to face or by telephone (Chadwick, Bahr, & Albrecht, 1984; Fowler, 1993; Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).

Six of the nine study interviews were done using the face to face format, and were conducted at the participants' offices or in a mutually agreed upon setting, which reduced

participant apprehension and increased their comfort level. Due to the limitations of time and money, three of the study interviews were conducted by telephone at a time selected by the interviewee. Unanticipated responses in the semi-structured, interview format opened alternate avenues for exploration, while giving the study participants substantial control over the depth and range of specific topic coverage.

In qualitative studies, the researcher should ideally be open to all information that the participant wishes to communicate about his or her context and the phenomenon under investigation. Consequently, although the study used an interview approach, I also reviewed materials about the partnership, which were provided spontaneously by some study participants either just prior to or during their interviews. The participants, who voluntarily produced or presented this documentation, felt that it would give me a better appreciation of their programs and the environment in which the ventures operated.

These materials included personal journal entries, media releases, memorabilia, or anecdotal stories pertaining to the partnerships. One respondent explained that creating a flow chart of the partnership history helped him reflect on his experiences or as he put it, "I think better with a pen in my hand." Another showed me a decal worn by many program faculty and students, the symbolism of which he said, "...was at the heart of who and what they were all about in this program." In addition, one exemplary partnership invited me to attend a by-invitation-only postsecondary administrative conference, at which that particular partnership was being presented by its joint leadership. I accepted their invitation, and subsequently received copies of the presentation materials used. As a qualitative researcher, I studied this and the other

material brought forth voluntarily by the leaders; I used this documentation as an adjunct to support data analysis or to tailor the interview guide for individual interview sessions.

Design

Question design for the interviews was developed over a period of several months based on information supplied from the ongoing literature search, ethics review, in-class peer review, instructor and supervisory comment, documentation provided by participants, and personal experience. In addition, graduate research methodology courses at the University of Alberta gave me two formal opportunities to practice and refine the interview guide. The first was in a mock interview with a postsecondary partnership leader, whose feedback is not included in this report, and the second was in my pilot study, the results of which are included in this investigation. The pilot study data are attributed to Partnership A.

As I moved through the data collection phase of the project, some further minor refinement of the instrument occurred before or during each interview in response to the specific circumstances of the participants being interviewed and my prior knowledge of their collaborative program. This modification was in keeping with the tenants of qualitative research, which stress that the semi-structured interview guide may be adapted to meet the language style and vocabulary of individual respondents. Also in varying the sequence or wording of the questions and adding or omitting questions, the researcher may be better equipped to be sensitive to the depth and direction that interviewee wishes to have in the dialogue. This empathetic approach builds trust and understanding

between the interviewer and the participant, which may ultimately lead to a more fruitful discussion of the issues under consideration (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).

Sampling

This study employed purposeful or criterion sampling to select nine corporate and community college leaders, representing four exemplary community college and business-industry partnership programs in Western Canada. These collaborative ventures are identified in this report as Programs A, B, C, or D.

The Selection of Organizations. This form of purposeful sampling "involves the selection of cases that satisfy an important criterion" (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p.234). The postsecondary institutions chosen for study were all members of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges in the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. A roster supplied by the national headquarters of ACCC confirmed individual membership status. I chose this sample criterion, as it narrowed the potential sample frame to include educational providers with a somewhat similar philosophy towards adult education and common heritage. The literature talked of the formation of the Canadian college network and affirms that member organizations tended have a sense of shared vision, mandate, and needs (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). This sample design was not attempting to seek commonalties within the sample for the purposes of generalizing from one organization to another, as that is not the goal of qualitative research. Rather I hoped to limit the pool of potential participants, so that I could do more effective research on the context of each unique partnership and better

understand contemporary issues related to each, while still working within the narrow timeframe of the study. In addition, I also hoped to take advantage of my own familiarity with this type of college environment and my personal physical proximity to this region in order to gain ready access to the potential sample pool.

Following this, I then further focused my sample frame to include only those Western Canadian ACCC colleges, which have received a national or provincial award for collaborative programming excellence with business or industry within the past five years, during the period 1994-1999 inclusive. The lists of winners were downloaded from various award sponsoring, web sites following an extensive search of media data banks. From this roster, I selected four partnerships to approach. I attempted to maximize sample variation by including as diverse a sample of collaborative programming as was possible (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p.232). The programs all had unique characteristics: some were directed at internal employees or external groups; others required part-time or full-time attendance; some were self-directed or were mandatory; others were offered at a single site, while others were multi-site delivery crossing provincial lines; and, some were credit offerings leading to a professional or trades and technical certification, while others were noncredit.

Each college, which became a member of the sample group, then referred me to their corporate partner. These corporations were included in the research sample.

The Selection of the Collaborative Leaders

The senior academic management of each college, where such an award had been received, nominated one or two collaborative leaders from their recognized partnership.

These nominees were to be the institutional experts on and legitimate representatives of their partnership.

I contacted the senior academic management of each college, where such an award had been received, and asked him or her to nominate one or two collaborative leaders from their recognized partnership. These nominees were to be the institutional experts on and legitimate representatives of their partnership. I informed the academic administrator that I would then approach their nominees for recruitment into my study. There was one exception to this selection process. In one case, I was referred by college administration to the public relations department. Officials there helped refer me to the appropriate college leader directly. This leader then sought the appropriate, senior administrative approval within that college on my behalf, which was granted. Additional ethical or legal review of my research study was undertaken separately by three-quarters of the college and corporate entities involved.

Once approval was given, either directly by the senior management or via a review panel, the respective authorities at the community college then signed collegiate institutional consent forms. Following this, I was given permission to contact their internal nominees. Nominees were contacted by phone or email initially with an immediate formal letter and information package follow-up. In almost all cases, the college's senior management had informed the nominees of the purpose and methodology of the study, prior to my contacting them, and had sought the nominees' approval before putting their names forward for consideration. All leaders approached gave their consent to be contacted and later agreed to participate in the study.

When leaders from the community colleges agreed to participate in the research, I asked them to refer me to their appropriate corporate counterparts. Each college leader provided me with corporate contact information, and in most cases, contacted their counterparts to introduce me and inform them of the study. I then sent a formal letter and information package to the individual at each business or industry, who was in direct supervisory authority over the corporate representative recommended to me by the college nominee. This written communication was immediately followed up with telephone contact. In two cases, the corporate management emailed me a reply immediately upon receipt of the posted information package. They express their preference for electronic communication, due to their busy work schedules. I was given permission to contact the corporate nominee, and I telephoned each person to recruit him or her into the study. In each case, the business or industry representative received a participant information package with consent forms for review. In all, five corporate and four leaders consented to be interviewed, representing four exemplary business-industry and community college partnership programs in Western Canada.

Consent and Confidentiality

As a graduate research project, this study had to meet the ethical guidelines as established by the University was Alberta. A copy of my application package was sent to each organization and participant, as well as, copies of my study's consent forms for pre-viewing. Contact information was also attached should any party have questions or concerns regarding their rights as research participants.

I requested in my initial contact communication that my research be reviewed as per individual organizational policy for ethical consideration. In all, three quarters of the participating partnerships required internal ethical or ethical-legal review of the research prior to giving consent. In all these cases, I was required to sign either internal consent forms or my own modified study consent forms to indicate my understanding of and co-operation with their organizational policies on data usage and confidentiality. These reviews did not reveal any ethical concerns or deficits in my originally approved University of Alberta research design.

I reviewed informed consent criteria with each participant at the start of each interview, and I asked each to sign a consent form that verified their willingness to participate in the research and their understanding of the consent criteria reviewed. With telephone interviews, I asked respondents for verbal consent and requested them to mail or fax a paper copy of the appropriate forms to me. In all cases, consent was given and a verbatim transcript of each interview was made. In addition, I used pseudonyms for both the participant and his or her parent organization in the transcription process in order to protect the confidentiality of all involved. No informants expressed any concerns regarding ethical considerations during the course of this investigation.

Data Collection

Data were collected from the nine leaders in separate, semi-structured interviews in the period between late February and June 1999. Although interviews were anticipated to take one hour, the majority of the discussions exceeded this timeframe. Interviewees were given a copy of the interview schedule prior to meeting with me. This was an

important part of the qualitative research approach used. The prior reading of the questions for the interview, increased the comfort of the participants with the interview process, and allowed them time to reflect on the issues more deeply. I felt this led to richer and more personally satisfying answers, as virtually all respondents expressed their gratitude at having time to look back over their experiences and, in several cases, collect materials or write down their thoughts about or illustrative anecdotes involving the partnership and evaluation for use in the interview.

Permission to audiotape the sessions was sought and, in addition, field notes were made. Pertinent transcribed sections from each interview, along with my interpretations of that material, were forwarded by email or mail, as requested, to each interviewee for their verification and approval. Participants were actively encouraged at the close of the interview and in a memo attached to each transcript copy to add, remove, or change wording in both the transcribed and interpretative material to better reflect their true meanings. Several respondents took the opportunity to modify their transcripts by adding additional thoughts or changing the wording.

Data Analysis

This research used the grounded theory approach wherein ideally the categories applied to the data obtained emerged from the data themselves (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p.565). I felt that this strategy would be most compatible with the qualitative nature of this investigation. My goal was to present the phenomenon from the perspective of those participating in that phenomenon. As such, the easiest and most logical path to that goal would be to allow the rich detail of their data to provide me with categories for analysis.

To this end, I continuously reviewed the data after each interview. I found after initially hiring someone to transcribe the pilot study tapes that I found it more productive to transcribe the audiotapes myself. This allowed me to become intimately familiar with the content of each tape, and also afforded me the opportunity to add comment to my field notes about potentially important themes revealed on each tape. Interview data were then entered into a computer database, as they became available throughout the project. I compared the interview transcript of the collaborative and the college leader for each partnership in great depth. Following the interview phase of the study, I compared each set of interviews to those from the other programs reviewed.

In the pilot study, I had the support of a colleague who critically reviewed my data analysis from the raw transcripts to the final coded and interpreted text. This formed an audit trail for my research. No significant revision was suggested for my main study.

Responses were analysed both inductively and deductively for themes. I decided to begin the data analysis with a deductive approach. In the course of this investigation, I was fortunate to have taken three highly relevant, graduate courses. One course dealt with postsecondary-corporate partnership. The second focussed on evaluation, and the third examined leadership in the Canadian, postsecondary system. As part of these courses, I was exposed to a diverse body of literature and presentations that were pertinent to my research. I used these experiences to craft my interview guide. It served as a generic scaffold for the collection of data. Despite this, each interview was unique. As each informant and I talked we added to and modified this scaffold of questions to make the interview more relevant and meaningful to his or her partnership. Nonetheless, I was able to use this guide as my initial coding system. I deduced five major themes

from these research subquestions. I then grouped the data accordingly into the following categories: leader role and responsibilities, stakeholder identities and needs, evaluative activities, leadership attributes, and wisdom gained. A word processing package was used to facilitate this process.

Coded data were studied for patterns missed. It was apparent in this process that there was a significant body of data that could not be categorized using these five predetermined themes. I felt that these data were potentially of great interest to my study and should not be omitted from consideration and further comment. Therefore, I re-examined all the data again inductively. Using an open coding approach, I critically reviewed each line of interview material for emergent themes. This process proved very worthwhile, as almost all the previously uncoded data were now coded. An extremely minor portion of uncoded text still remained, scattered throughout several interviews. This material was then re-evaluated, judged irrelevant to the central research question, and eliminated from further analysis and discussion. I reorganized my coding frame to accommodate these revisions as in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Coding Frame for the Study

Main Category	Sub-category 1	Sub-category 2	Sub-category 3
Leader Role & Responsibilities	**In-house**	**Partnership**	
This refers to the assigned organizational position and associated duties and for which that individual is held personally accountable.	This pertains to responsibilities and duties owed to, and dictated by the organization that is the primary employer of the individual.	This refers to the role and responsibilities of the leader regarding the collaborative programming.	
Leadership Attributes	**Technical**	**Personal**	
This refers to characteristics associated with a collaborative leader from business-industry or postsecondary.	This refers to computer, fiscal management, communication, electronic or mechanical skills needed.	This pertains to "soft" or humanistic characteristics associated with collaborative leadership.	
Stakeholders: Identities & Needs	**In-house-Individual**	**External-Individual**	**Joint**
This refers to those with a vested interest in the program; they include those specific audiences for evaluative information.	This pertains to those, employed, appointed or enrolled by a leader's organization, who feel they have a vested interest in the program.	This refers to audiences, other than those in-house, with whom one leader is the prime communicator about the collaborative program.	This refers to audiences, other than individual, with whom both leaders communicate about the program.

(Continued next page)

Main Category	Sub-category 1	Sub-category 2	Sub-category 3
Evaluative These are processes undertaken to determine the quality or value of a product, service, or procedure.	**Formal** Such processes are systematic. The results of such evaluation are typically made available to specific audiences, who expect such feedback.	**Informal** These processes are casual instances, where feedback is obtained in an unsystematic manner for the use of the evaluator.	
Wisdom Gained This refers to the skills, knowledge, and attitudes leaders feel they and their organizations have developed as a direct result of the collaborative partnership.	**Individual** This refers to personal and professional growth that leaders see they have gained by participating in the partnership.	**Organization** This pertains to increase in skills, knowledge and attitudes gained by participating organizations.	
Barriers to Evaluative Knowledge Creation These are factors that hinder the leaders' ability to create evaluative knowledge about the progress, quality, and success of a program.	**Context** This refers to situational factors, such as organizational strengths & culture & history, mandate, people skills & interests that are barriers to knowledge creation.	**Structure** These are infrastructural factors, such as power structure, budget, policies, accountability, & reporting frameworks that are barriers to knowledge creation.	**Process** These are action-oriented factors, such as defining roles and goals, conflict resolution, business plan creation that are barriers to knowledge creation.

Trustworthiness

A qualitative study's truth-value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality determine its trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As such the power of a qualitative investigation rests on the researcher's ability to honestly reflect the world of the subject for the readers to allow them to decide what is meaningful to them and transferable (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).

A significant threat to the trustworthiness of qualitative investigations occurs when the researcher imposes his or her values, beliefs, meanings, and assumptions upon those of the participants. If the researcher does not identify his or her biases, the danger remains that the researcher may unduly edit or wrongly interpret the data supplied. It is therefore essential that a qualitative researcher is sensitive to these hazards and acts in a proactive manner to reduce such investigative liabilities. To this end, I have included a statement of beliefs to address my identified biases towards and beliefs about this research topic. As well, I kept a reflective journal throughout the study. This journal helped maintain an audit trail, thereby ensuring my neutrality, and record critical incidents, which proved pertinent to the study, especially regarding data collection and analysis. An independent graduate student reviewed my data analysis procedures during my pilot study, thereby forming an audit trail and allowing for any necessary analysis revisions prior to my main study.

Credibility was safeguarded with the inclusion of rich description, which although seeking to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents, sought to provide sufficient contextual detail to permit the reader to gain a sense of the partnership and the environment in which the leader operates, as well as, offer support for any interpretive

material included in the analysis of the data. Additional validation came from the creation of an interview guide, which was subject to peer, supervisory, and professional academic review, as well as, field testing in a sample interview and during the pilot study. This study used a semi-structured interview format that permitted me to be responsive to the individual respondents, and still allowed the survey process to some consistency in the treatment of each participant.

Verbatim transcription of the audiotaped interviews with member checking also helped confirm that data included in this study truly reflects that understanding intended by the participants and not merely my subjectivist interpretations as the writer-researcher. The corporate and the college leader for each partnership were interviewed and reviewed their transcripts, with my interpretations, within a condensed timeframe to minimize information sharing and the likelihood of a partnership's leaders influencing each other. Three respondents took the opportunity to amend sections of their transcripts by adding additional comment or rephrase sentences to enhance clarity. One participant requested a pseudonym change; he felt that the one used in the transcript could potentially influence a reader's interpretation of his portion of the text.

Triangulation was employed to look at the phenomenon through multiple perspectives. As Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) state, "The key to triangulation is to vary in some way the approach used to generate the finding that you are seeking to corroborate" (p. 575). In the data analysis phase of this investigation, I compared the responses of both the corporate and community college leaders in each partnership. I reviewed any personal materials provided or public documentation available on the partnership, which helped me engage in a more meaningful dialogue with the participant and interpret the

interview data with greater sensitivity. Any conflicting data was reviewed and either discussed in the data analysis section of this report or eliminated from consideration.

And finally since, as I have previously stated transferability and not generalizability was the goal of this qualitative research, I have tried to provide sample responses with my findings to add contextual richness and clarify meanings. The effectiveness of my efforts will rest on how well I have made the phenomenon and its context real to the reader, so that he or she can make sense of the study and decide how pertinent its findings are to his or her own situation.

Chapter Four: Findings

Overview of the Findings

This chapter is divided into two major sections. The first part provides a description of each partnership's corporate and community college leaders, as well as the context in which that leader and the program operates. The second half of the chapter explores the perceptions of the corporate and community college leadership, as knowledge creators, regarding the role that evaluation plays in program quality.

A Review of Context

The following is a brief description of the context of each of the four exemplary partnerships and their nine business-industry or collegiate leaders, which formed the basis for my investigation. In this section, I hope to give the reader a sense of the specific circumstances in which each leader and his or her program is situated. These understandings will enhance reader appreciation of the informant responses that follow in the second part of this chapter. Pseudonyms were used or names were omitted in certain sections of this chapter to help safeguard respondents' confidentiality and that of their organizations.

Program A: Arden Ashforth and Stewart MacKenzie were the recognized leaders of an exemplary corporate-community college partnership program in Western Canada. It is referred to in this study as Program A.

Arden's college division administered the partnership program. She was a long-standing college employee. In addition to this collaborative program, her division offered a broad range of academic programming, approximately half of which was tailored to the business sector. Stewart MacKenzie, the corporate leader, was the originator of the program concept. He was a long-standing member of his corporation. This initiative was connected to his position because he requested as he had a personal interest in the program; as such it formed a small part of his assigned responsibilities, but consumed a large portion of his time and energy both on and off the job.

The program had a track record of over 5 years. It was originally based in an urban, ethnically diverse city, where the company (Corporation A) was a significant contributor to the regional economic base. The community college (College A) had a reputation for entrepreneurialism and had an established record of service in the city. It prided itself on having a family atmosphere amongst its staff and administration. It offered a mix of academic, vocational, special interest, and remedial programming. The College was also a major provider of workplace training in the form of fee-for-service programming, collaborative ventures, and specialized technical programming. College A marketed programming that catered to many corporate employees and their families.

Corporation A used high-end technology to manufacture its products for international and national sale. The company had a multi-site operation; the largest centre was located in the same city as College A. The business employed several hundred employees. Corporation A had a solid national reputation for technical innovation and prided itself on being a team-based organization.

Program A catered to corporate workers initially, as part of an overall training and development push within the Corporation to enhance employee effectiveness and efficiency. The program was later modified and offered to others outside Corporation A. Program A had multiple, noncredit, context-based course offerings that provided a variety of academically oriented skill and knowledge training. It was a multi-stage, part-time program, allowing participants to progress as desired. Participation was voluntary, and the program was presented as an option for inclusion in an employee's self-directed learning plan.

Program B: Lyndon Ryan and Nickola Burak were the recognized leaders of an exemplary corporate-community college partnership program in Western Canada. It is referred to in this study as Program B.

Nickola's college division managed the partnership program. In addition to this collaborative program, her division offered a range of highly specialized, occupational programming. Virtually all of these

offerings were tailored to private sector interests, and many were linked to provincial accreditation.

Lyndon Ryan was a long term Corporation B employee. His workload at the time of the study required him to coordinate projects that included Program B. The program met Lyndon's departmental needs and was directly linked to his work interests. Program B formed a significant part of Lyndon's assigned responsibilities.

The partnership program had been in operation for over 3 years. It was headquartered in an urban, ethnically diverse city, where the corporation (Corporation B) was a major employer. The community college (College B) had a history that demonstrated its long-standing commitment to vocational, literacy, and remedial education, correspondingly to the employment needs and demographics of the region. It prided itself on being a leader in educational technology, showing a keen interest in computer-assisted learning.

College B had an established record of service in the city. It marketed workplace education in the form of fee-for-service programming, brokered programs, collaborative ventures, and specialized technical programming to Corporation B employees. They and their families were a significant sector of the College's credit and noncredit audience.

Corporation B used high-end technology to manufacture its products for international and national sale. The company was located in

the same city as College B, and its workforce exceeded several hundred employees. Corporation B was nationally recognized for its technical excellence.

Program B offered the vocational students of College B the opportunity to gain skills, knowledge, and attitudes related to their College program of studies. The graduates were eligible for provincial certification. Program B was full-time credit, context-based offering that provided extensive work experience combined with class instruction. Students participating in a technical program at College B were required to take the program. Many of these students were self-paying, and most sought enrolment in the program specifically because of the College's partnership with Corporation B.

Program C: Donald Jarrett, Gordon Dell, and Mitchell Bassi were the recognized leaders of an exemplary corporate-community college partnership program in Western Canada. It is referred to in this study as Program C.

Mitchell, the academic leader, was one of the original members of the partnership team. This program was a major part of Mitchell's college duties. In addition to this collaborative program, his division offered a range of occupational programming. Program C was tailored to meet national and international industrial standards.

Donald Jarrett, a corporate leader, had done extensive work on Program C from its inception. Donald gave final approval to all annual

plans regarding Program C, and, as well, he conducted ongoing, evaluative studies on the program.

Gordon Dell, a corporate leader, was responsible for Program C on a daily basis. He monitored program operations, evaluated formatively, and made decisions affecting program implementation. He was the key liaison with the College. Gordon was a graduate of Program C. He has also instructed and helped redesign portions of Program C to meet corporate audience needs. The program was directly linked to his corporate interests. Program C formed a significant part of Gordon's assigned responsibilities, as it was one of several major projects he managed for his organization.

The partnership program had been in operation for over 5 years. It was headquartered in a small community. The community college (College C) had a history that demonstrated its long-standing commitment to academic, vocational, literacy, and remedial education, correspondingly to the employment needs and demographics of the region. College C was pleased to promote itself as a responsive and people-oriented organization, which provided high quality programming tailored to the needs of small business and industry.

Corporation C was a business that sold technological products nationally. Although the company was a Canadian firm, it had close ties with international manufacturers. Corporation C was located in an ethnically diverse, urban centre. Corporation C was nationally and

internationally recognized for its commitment to high quality customer service and visionary leadership.

Program C offered the vocational students of College C and the employees or stakeholders of Corporation C the opportunity to gain skills, knowledge, and attitudes in a specific vocational field. Their accomplishments led to professional certification, which was recognized nationally and internationally.

Program C had multiple, credit and noncredit, context-based, full-time and part-time course offerings that provided extensive fieldwork combined with class instruction. Portions of Program C were also made available off-campus as needed. Participation in the technical program at College C allowed some students to take the program. Corporation C paid the College for all of its employees that enrolled; most of whom attended sessions organized specifically for them. Participation for Company C employees or stakeholders was voluntary. Program C was offered to internal employees and those of affiliates, as part of a self-directed, training and development initiative. Company C also gave the College equipment and administrative or technical support either at no charge or at greatly discounted rates.

Program D: Christopher Casel and Tomas Quintara were the recognized leaders of an exemplary corporate-community college partnership program in Western Canada. It is referred to in this study as Program D.

Christopher Casel was the academic leader. His college division administered the partnership program. In addition to this collaborative program, his division offered a range of applied academic programming, most which was tailored to the private sector. Tomas Quintara, the corporate leader, was the originator of the partnership program. He had an extensive work history within the professional field and with the company itself. He was responsible for training and development initiatives. Tomas was assigned to supervise and plan this program because of his personal expertise in the technical field and as a trainer. Program D formed a significant portion of his assigned management responsibilities. He also took a lead role in evaluation of the program, including student assessment.

The partnership program was a comparatively new venture, having been in operation for less than 4 years. It was a multi-site delivery at two urban sites. Corporation D was a significant contributor to the regional economic bases of these cities.

Community College D had a provincial reputation for innovative programming. It had an established record of service in the ethnically diverse city, where it was located. College D offered a mix of academic, vocational, and noncredit programming. It was also a major provider of workplace training in the form of fee-for-service programming, collaborative ventures, and specialized technical programming. College D

marketed programming to many Corporation D employees and their primary corporate stakeholders.

Corporation D was an information-based concern, which had dozens of private affiliates. It was a multi-site operation with its headquarters in the same city as College D. It employed in excess of several hundred employees. Corporation D had proprietary rights to its products. Its stakeholders had to comply with Corporation D's guidelines in order to be authorized to use its products. These products contributed to the viability and profitability of the businesses of these stakeholders. Corporation D prided itself on its quality customer service and its role as a learning organization.

Program D catered primarily to the stakeholders of Corporation D. It was conceived as part of a training and development push to enhance stakeholders' knowledge and skills regarding company products. Program D had multiple, noncredit, context-based courses offerings that provided applied skill and knowledge training. It was a full-time program. Participation in the program was voluntary. It was presented as an option for inclusion in a stakeholder's self-directed learning plan. Corporation D paid a portion of the stakeholder's registration fees.

Composite Chart of Leaders

In all, five corporate and four college leaders consented to be interviewed, representing four exemplary collaborative programs in Western Canada, as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Leadership Roster for Exemplary Programs Sampled

Collaborative Program	Corporation Leader (s)	Community College Leader
A	Stewart MacKenzie	Arden Ashforth
B	Lyndon Ryan	Nickola Burak
C	Donald Jarrett Gordon Dell	Mitchell Bassi
D	Tomas Quintara	Christopher Casel

Key Informants' Responses

The remainder of this chapter explores the perceptions of the exemplary program corporate and community college leadership, as knowledge creators, regarding the role that evaluation played in his or her program's quality. Information pertaining to this issue was obtained by asking each respondent a series of questions, as outlined in the introductory chapter of this report. These questions gathered leaders' reflections on their evaluative roles and expertise-sets, how they identified stakeholders' evaluative needs, what preferences they had developed for gathering evaluative information, what key evaluative lessons did they feel were important to pass on, and what evaluative barriers had they encountered in their partnership.

The second part of this chapter is divided into two subsections. The first presents the perceptions of the community college leaders. The second offers the opinions of the corporate representatives. A brief summary concludes the chapter.

Community College Leaders' Opinions

This part of the chapter presents the opinions of the community college leaders. This review of the discussion covers: (a) leader role and responsibilities, both in-house and to the partnership; (b) identification of specific stakeholder groups and their evaluative needs - internally, externally, and jointly; (c) evaluative activities used in the program, including formal and formal strategies; (d) leadership attributes demonstrated, both technical and personal; (e) contextual, structural, or procedural barriers that they have experienced in evaluation; and, (f) the wisdom gained by individual leaders and the organization. Taken as a whole, these reflections offer a rich description of what these leaders have learned about evaluation, as a means to enhance program quality.

Leader Roles and Responsibilities

Leader roles and responsibilities refer to the assigned organizational position and associated duties to which each respondent was assigned and held personally accountable. These roles and responsibilities can be considered from two perspectives, internal or external. Internal roles and responsibilities pertain to those expectations and duties owed to and dictated by the organization that is the primary employer of an individual. External roles and responsibilities refer to those expectations and duties linked to others outside the individual's home organization.

In-house. Internally, all the community college leaders were in positions of authority within their own organizational hierarchies. The majority of the respondents said that their jobs were the main reason that they were actively interested in and knowledgeable about their respective programs. Christopher Casel crafted his college's formal response to Company D's call for proposals because he held a job that handled private sector collaboration. As a result, he became the academic leader in the partnership. Christopher explained it was "...indeed part of my job and position here, to build these kinds of partnerships and ongoing relationships with these sorts of clients." Nicola recalled that the collaborative program simply "...it fell on my lap," when she took over her post at her college. It was an important facet of her new division, and Nicola immediately grasped its significance to her job:

> Five years ago in the minus revenue situation, [there] was the necessity of getting some dollars...The partnership brings in revenue, which reduces the amount of base dollars coming to us internally...We survive with the help of the revenue generated in the partnership!

Only one leader felt that his involvement in his partnership was an outgrowth of his professional expertise in the discipline area covered in the program. His explicit and tactic knowledge sanctioned his leadership authority. As a member of the original program team, he personally took on the internal leadership role in addition to his primary instructional duties. As such each leader had by virtue of senior management approval, the right to speak on behalf of his or her organization in matters regarding the collaborative program. Correspondingly, he or she was internally accountable, meaning

both responsible and answerable, within his or her own institution for the progress and quality of the venture.

The respondents were the frontline managers, coordinators, supervisors, deans, chairpersons, instructors, or administrators of their programs. They were key in planning and supervising budgets, crafting business plans or contracts, implementing college policies and procedures, overseeing the quality and progress of the learning experience, and supervising in-house teams. In short, no matter what their job title, they acted as the in-house leaders and chief, frontline decision-makers for their programs.

Christopher Casel, like the other collegiate leaders, saw his role as that of a participatory manager: "I'd like to think that if I'm doing my job effectively, I'm probably at my desk maybe one day a week." The leaders were involved in multiple facets of the programming, including evaluation. In this part of the partnership program, the leaders used their energies and power to access diverse sources of information about program quality and progress. They described how they formally and informally gathered, and later examined data and information about their programs and the contexts in which they operated. Several said they didn't just evaluate the program, but rather they tried to make sense of how the program fit into the broader scheme of the division or college. For Arden Ashforth, this responsibility included working with the partnership as part of her division's "...total internal programming package" in which she, as leader, was actively involved, "...evaluating... progress, acting on it, and deciding strategies."

Most college leaders felt that many of their duties surrounding evaluation were highly political, especially that of cultural and collaborative interpreter. Most of the respondents found that even in-house there were some difficulties. Nicola, for example,

said she faced challenges in trying to promote understanding about the progress and quality of her program within her community college:

> I try to communicate and let them know how the partnership is proceeding, but it's just such a different world and it's such a different experience from what they have, it's hard to explain to someone. ...It can be very difficult to make other people understand exactly what's involved in this partnership.

They felt that those who were not participants did not understand the nature of collaborative programming, as they did. Because of their experiences, some leaders felt they had fundamentally different knowledge and attitudes than did non-participants. They said that this was a source of discord and a barrier to understanding. As one leader recalled, "I'm not sure how interested and how much others, who are not directly involved like other faculty, understand and appreciate. I mean I don't think another classroom teacher sees this as important. Some do. But not all." Leaders recommended that those involved in partnership must anticipate and be proactive bridging this gap. Half of the respondents were involved in technically oriented projects. These leaders found the difficulties communicating in-house were greater than those communicating across cultural lines with corporate partners. One leader recalled:

> It's easier to talk to industry sometimes than the college. ...In all honesty, they're starting to understand. But a couple of years ago, they didn't understand at all. ...It took a lot of my patience to get bright Ph.D. people to understand that side of the business. ... I sure am educating the college!

All leaders were adamant that an important part of their jobs was keeping those in authority, such as senior management or boards of governors, informed of program quality

and success. This was in part because administration was keenly interested in these programs. As one leader reflected, " The President is aware of...what's going on. The VP Academic is also aware. There is attention being drawn with each success and each big client that comes in." Some leaders understood from this attention that their projects supported the missions of the college. They commented that senior administration supported the sharing of their knowledge and experiences, including evaluative, with others in the organization. Christopher felt that his administrators encouraged him to share his insights and experiences with others in the organization in order "...to involve other areas, talk with them about how this [collaborative programming works], what we are doing, and how we [internally] can work together."

Most leaders felt that they had control over how and when they shared their insights. For example, one commented, "I think that modelling is an excellent way to educate people, and...that's what I've been trying to do here, to give them a model, to show them this works." The respondents said that their insider status gave them membership in the college community and a shared history with some of its faculty and administration. As effective political leaders, they used those strengths as leverage to build relationships with which to share or receive knowledge.

The leaders said that these relationships translated into benefits, such as support for specialized resources or protection, when evaluative benchmarks or procedures designed for traditional programming disadvantaged the program. For example, one respondent noted that, "They don't look at the rest of the training we do. I'm kind of putting some numbers together dealing with that part of my business to explain. If they look at just the fifteen-week course, it doesn't look like we do too much!" Others noted that these relationships

ensured that evaluative knowledge they shared was paid special attention resulting in rapid implementation of needed changes and the resources to make these a reality. Another leader added that as a decision-maker, it was vital "...to make sure that you have the backing ...and the understanding of the institution" in order to be relatively autonomous in working with their partners. This freed the leader to be more responsive in evaluating changes needed to meet business needs: "You know that if someone phones up and they want a particular thing done, ...you let management know after the fact. ...You need to have a good understanding to...do something like that."

Several other leaders agreed that once they had the backing of their college, they had greater leeway to work with their partners to improve program quality or progress. They could look at making necessary modifications, such as changes to the program content or delivery format. For example, Mitchell Bassi used his leadership and expertise to create a new course. He recalled that his partner "...was amazed that this out-of-province course that I just did, got put together in two weeks. ...In my way of thinking, if we're going to do it, let's do it." Some leaders, like Mitchell, felt secure in self-defining conditions on the level of their participation in decision-making because they saw that their actions helped make their partnership a success.

In addition, the informants felt that their jobs required them to be problem seers, who tried to locate weak spots in the program or research trends that could impact their programs. For example, Arden's role with her program steering committee made her accountable for long range program planning, evaluation, and promotion. She assessed how best to modify and expand her program to suit emerging markets that she had investigated. This expansion met the needs of the partnership and supported the mission

of her employer. She, like several others, noted that they were assuming additional responsibilities in the process of opening new doors for their programs and colleges.

All leaders said that their colleges supported collaboration with business and industry. They felt that their colleges expected them to find new partnerships or be assertive in enhancing the productivity and success of their existing programs. Sometimes, as Nicola recalled, this required the leaders to "plant seeds."

> About a year ago, we decided to have a meeting with all the technical contractors. So we invited twenty or thirty for lunch, and basically talked about training and working with them as partners [with this program]. Everybody agreed around the table and they went away. A month later one of them called and said…'Would you like to partner with me now?' That's the way it starts!

The majority of the leaders felt that building relationships with the corporate sector was the best way to lay the groundwork for future liaisons, which were advantageous to the program. As in Nicola's case, several commented that the time required for this seeding to come to fruition may be lengthy, but they, as leaders, were expected to move quickly once a response came. Therefore, the leaders tried to keep track of contextual changes that might affect the programming and any prospective partners.

Partnership. The academic respondents felt that their jobs required them to assume responsibilities and duties particular to the partnership. Most respondents said that these were service-oriented, as they thought that they were a "convenience for business" in that they were a recognized point of contact and a guide for the private sector contact through the academic organization. One leader commented that this meant

considerable attention needed to be paid to the corporate specifications and expectations of quality and performance. "We certainly want the learners to be happy and satisfied too and we endeavour to make sure that happens, but ultimately it's the guy who's paying the bills who's calling the shots."

All, who felt this way, said that they wanted more than to be considered a simple contact. For example, one leader wanted to use his position "...to build a relationship with the person, with the organization over a long period of time." Thus, he, like most, sought to develop other collaborative projects with the corporate partner. They thought that, as relationship-builders, they could encourage the business organization to look naturally to the college to fulfil their needs over time. Several interviewees explained that perceptions of their existing program's quality and success supported the longevity of this relationship and spurred the development of more projects.

Therefore, the relationship between the organizations was for several leaders even more important than the program itself. Nurturing the relationship was a critical part of their leadership role. As one respondent explained, "...The mindfulness is on maintaining the client-relationship - not the money and [other] resources to continue a project. The resources are a result of properly managing the relationship. One person thought the leader's role was "...to become friends with your partners. It can't be a strictly business-type relationship." The majority of the leaders agreed that ideally the relationship between the two leaders was the foundation of the program. The trust and openness between the leaders contributed to collaboration in evaluation and decision-making. As Arden Ashforth's said, "We, Stewart MacKenzie and I, both share the

responsibility. We work together to look at the feedback and judge the quality of what we're doing. When we make changes...we do it together."

The participants also said that they were responsible for identifying and handling most programming problems, which as Arden said was a great deal "...more than just keeping tabs!" Their respective colleges expected them to continuously judge the quality and progress of the program, and then implement recommendations. Consequently, the respondents used the power and access of their positions to monitor, sense, and address interruptions in the normal flow of the program before they became a serious liability. In this, the respondents thought of themselves as proactive managers and the problem fixers. They described examples wherein they evaluated how things were going at a particular moment in time, decided if action was necessary, and then, if a response was deemed appropriate, they acted in a hands-on manner to safeguard program quality and progress.

Christopher provided a personal example on dealing with problem solving, which typified their opinions:

> I don't think anyone likes to deal with anything that is unpleasant or uncomfortable and I'm certainly no exception, but if something comes out in evaluation, you have to. ...I'll give you an example. I had a project instructor with whom the learners were uncomfortable. ...That had to be addressed...one-on-one and ...talked about. ...I need to acknowledge that I understand, ...and I need to fix it. And I did because ultimately that instructor was not rehired.

Several added comments that supported their role as negotiator in evaluation, when sometimes things did not quite go so smoothly or the parties involved were more

politically sensitive. For example, Nicola said, "...I'm the guy, who gets to go back and negotiate with senior management at the College to see if we can't get [what we identify we need]...for the partnership. That's my job [and]...that's an important part of what I do."

All interviewees described various responsibilities and duties that they shared with their co-leaders from business. Not all were mentioned by each respondent. Examples included: setting contracts; creating or modifying business plans; conducting planning or other scheduled meetings; conflict management; program evaluation and needs assessment; selecting, supervising, or evaluating instructors; writing joint reports, as needed; preparing presentations or developing information packages on the program; or determining criteria for success and setting evaluative benchmarks. The degree of collaboration for the majority was significant. As Mitchell mused, "I couldn't give you an hour figure. ...Some mornings I'll spend up to three hours non-stop on the phone with Gordon Dell. There're lots of times like that!"

All leaders said that the work they did together really helped make collaborative decision-making productive, especially in the area of assessing program quality and success. Arden reflected that:

> Having ongoing and involved leadership is critical, ...to talk to each other and build understanding, ...to look at what you need and decide what will work for you in that situation, ...[and] to try what you are both comfortable with. If it doesn't [work], then you try something else. It's ongoing and it changes.

In addition, each of the leaders identified external primary and secondary stakeholders to whom they had specific accountabilities, whether for legal, professional, or political reasons. Some, like Nicola, had "... a steering committee that meet twice a year or as required. [It] involves businesses...here, and it's a province wide requirement for our program." Half the leaders had the responsibility of organizing and leading their advisory groups and providing them with evaluative knowledge. In doing so, they fulfilled a professional and externally mandated obligation that was tied to their position as program leaders.

Leadership Attributes

Leadership attributes refer to the characteristics associated with a collaborative leader. These were categorized into technical or personal qualities. The technical attributes described were the mechanistic or more explicit types of knowledge, which an individual needed to fulfil his or her responsibilities as leader. Examples included requisite reading, computer hardware and software, telephone, or fax skills. As well, half the respondents said that they needed demonstrated particular technical competence because of the nature of their programs. Personal characteristics pertained to the soft or humanistic traits associated with collaborative leadership. Examples included communication, conflict management, and personal management skills.

Personal. In their reflections, the community college leaders focused on the personal attributes of communication, decision making, and problem solving skills. They

also emphasized the need for flexibility, curiosity, optimism, and enthusiasm in leadership.

Of all the soft skills, the leaders said they relied most heavily on their communication ability. Most felt they worked hard to be empathic and active listeners, adopting the language style and vocabulary of their partners to enhance mutual understanding. Christopher said this was an ideological and cultural necessity.

> My question would be why would anyone want business to be educated in academic language and processes. They're business people and the two cultures ...are totally different. That could be why a lot of institutions struggle in establishing partnerships because they're trying to change business into what they want when in fact, they should be client-driven. They should be adapting to what the business needs.

He and several other respondents agreed in their interviews that there was a cultural divide between corporate and academic partners. They argued that since they couldn't change the inherent nature of business, the expenditure of their precious resources to this end was futile. They thought it much more sensible for them, as expert learners, to become students of their prospective partners' cultures. This way they could develop insights about corporate culture, which would enable them to work more effectively with their business partners. This was thought to be particularly important in determining definitions of quality and progress.

Two other alternative reasons for using corporate language were given. One concluded that in highly technical programs, using common communication styles and language was natural. The leaders said that they simply acquired the language style and

vocabulary of the corporate world as the result of years of exposure to it. Arden offered another opinion that adopting business communication norms was simply building on traditional, academic practice. "We [as educators] are used to adapting to reach different students. You use the language and the style that is going to get your point across. In partnership, we adopt their terminology and do just that...It's a translation of sorts, and we [colleges] get good at this!" So "losing the education jargon" was a positive facet of communication for collaborative leadership.

All forms of interpersonal communication were used by the leaders, including face-to-face, telephone, electronic mail, fax, and memos or letters. There was, however, a strong preference for face-to-face or telephone communication over less personal modes of communication, despite the time and energy it required. As Nicola put it, "You have to go out and...talk to and listen to people" to effectively build understanding. Several others contended that face-to-face dialogue was simply the most intimate form of communication, and that intimacy reflected the true nature of personal relationships. As Christopher summarized, "...face-to-face dialogue is a tried, tested, and truly effective business-strategy for relationship building."

To satisfy the needs of partners, most typically the colleges' senior administrators, the majority of the leaders developed formal contracts or business plans after the program was up and running and had a proven track record. But only one partnership program began with this formal approach. The other three initially had very informal agreements, often relying on a handshake to establish their working relationships. Those, who did start informally, stated that written agreements could not hope to encompass the dynamic nature or richness of the real working program. Mitchell supported this saying, "...sitting

down and spelling, planning out every detail on a piece of paper beforehand [wouldn't work because]...by the time I sat down and wrote that out, I could have [the project] done!" Never-the-less most respondents reflected that collaboratively creating an initial framework of clearly stated goals and objectives and evaluative standards, encompassed for example in a written contract, mission and goal statement, or business plan, was a good idea. They felt that such pre-planning would safeguard their organizational interests and make them examine their planning in greater detail, thereby, enhancing communication as it applied to all facets of the programming.

Flexibility was also touted as a key soft skill that all the leaders relied upon. Arden used her flexibility, "...to learn to do by watching and changing what you do" in order to modify and improve programming. The leaders said they were required to evaluate conditions in the program constantly and make ongoing decisions based on their evaluative knowledge. This was a dynamic process. Christopher said it was tantamount to realizing that "The ideal doesn't always happen. ...You don't always get everything you want and that's OK." All felt that the only certainty in partnership was in recognizing that change is the only constant, and that leaders must be prepared to respond in a timely and flexible manner. They spoke of the futility of seeking accuracy and detail in a world in flux. As Mitchell said:

> I think you have to be...prepared for the unknown because you only think you have all your ducks in a row. ...You have to be able to change gears very quickly [in collaboration]!

Flexibility was also identified by two respondents, as a counter-weight against personal stress, as they tried to make numerous and sometimes quite complex decisions in a dynamic program environment.

And lastly, all respondents spoke of the personal pride and enthusiasm that they had in their programs. The programs were described as a source of energy and inspiration for many, which motivated them as leaders to make their particular program as high quality an offering as possible. As Mitchell put it: "...It really helps if you're committed to your product. I'm not sure that if I was doing a course on basket weaving, I would have the drive that I have right now. ...There certainly is for sure [personal pride] involved. "

Technical. The tremendous testimony to the humanistic side of leadership did not mean that the leaders did not find some technical skills, particularly administrative, essential. But as Arden said, management competence was assumed at their administrative level:

> We need clerical support and budget tracking, enrolment tracking - all the systems that help us maintain control of any program that we run here at the College. There's computers and all the hardware that goes with that too, and phones and e-mail. Of course, the leaders have to have the [technical] skills administer the program. That is naturally important, but you need to know what information to watch and what to do with it once you collect it. All the statistics in the world are useless if you can't make an informed decision.

All the respondents stated that they had access to various forms of technical support from within their own organizations. Supports mentioned included registration and enrolment, computer service, human resource, secretarial, media-graphic, or finance personnel. These service providers either collected or maintained data and information for the program or helped the program leader in performing his or her independent investigations.

Two respondents said that their personal, technical expertise in their collaborative program area was a significant benefit to their programs, as it enabled them to understand and get more actively involved in the curriculum development, assessment, or instructional side of their operations. They also felt their professional skill set made them more credible to their corporate partners. As one testified:

> We're highly respected by the companies in the industry. They ask for my input on the courses they write. They send me their courses and I'll say, 'This is no good. This won't work. Change this.' And you know they respect it.

They believed that the business and industry sector regarded their content expertise, as a valuable organizational asset. The partners said that they used their expertise in evaluation to make the programs high quality initiatives.

Stakeholder Identities and Needs

Stakeholders referred to those persons with a vested interest in the program; they included specific audiences for evaluative knowledge. These individuals or groups of individuals were categorized into three sectors. The first was the in-house (individual)

category. These audiences were those, who were employed or enrolled by the two leader's organizations. They were, for example, students, union members, peers, teachers, senior management, support staff, and the project team, including each other. Leaders said that these individuals formed the largest stakeholder grouping. The second group of stakeholders were external (individual). These audiences were those, external to the partnering organizations, with whom one leader was the primary communicator about the collaborative program. This included professional associations, particular provincial or regional committees, and think tanks. The third or joint stakeholder group consisted of external audiences with whom both leaders together communicated about the program. Examples of these stakeholders were prospective partners, media, and government agencies, departments, or advisory groups. All the leaders referred to multiple stakeholders to whom they voiced a responsibility and answerability. Most respondents mentioned all three levels of stakeholders in their interviews.

There was strong support from the data collected that the leaders appreciated a continuum of stakeholder accountability. In other words, the leaders felt that not all stakeholders would expect or wish to receive a uniform package of knowledge about the program, including that generated from evaluative activities. As such, the leaders said they tailored the content and the format of the knowledge to suit specific audience needs and expectations. For example, some, like Christopher, gave written reports to one audience, while doing presentations for another. Arden realized that her business partner did not want or need the depth of budget knowledge assessed that the college required. So she categorized, synthesized, and interpreted the collegiate budget information into a form that the partner could modify for corporate stakeholders. Nicola used the corporate

templates provided for specific individuals and departments. Mitchell used informal, dialogue to share his evaluative insights. Packaging the knowledge gave each corporate leader the knowledge he needed, in a form that he could use, and in a timely fashion. The interviewees gave many such examples of knowledge requested by various stakeholders.

Three leaders, whose programming had safety or legal issues as concerns, tended to be most specific in detailing the depth and breadth of in-house and external (individual) stakeholders' needs. They said that this was because the professional codes followed by their corporate partners were industry standards. In some cases, the respondents gave examples of specific legislation pertaining to evaluation, such as loss management controls. For example, one explained:

> We follow the plan that the industry partner gives us. When we figure we're done, we fill out the project form that then goes back to the industry partner. They send their [people] to look at what we have done and measure and report that its fine, good enough to go the next step, and carry on.
>
> ...We...have to follow their safety regulations, and they have a multitude of those. The equipment is very expensive and the students could endanger themselves or someone else if they are not supervised and trained properly. There are a lot of checklists and procedures to make sure that that doesn't happen.

Other examples of modifying information for specific stakeholders provided by the respondents included annual summative reports or certification examination protocols.

In addition, two leaders commented on attention paid to secondary stakeholder groups. For example, one leader gave an example of how identifying such a stakeholder and answering his or her knowledge needs could prevent difficulties for the program.

> Sometimes other businesses were not happy that we were engaged in this partnership. They thought that we were going to take business away from them. ...I let him know that we were training students for him. ...So we weren't taking work away from him, we were actually going to do a service for them down the road. ...You have to...let them know what's going on...how things are progressing. I work with a community college and these people are a big part of the business community. So, they have a say, ...even though they are not the people who signed the contract.

They believed that the mission and mandate of the community college, as well as, their own organizational cultures and histories made it important for them to exchange information with the broadest range of stakeholders, sometimes even the greater community. Several mentioned that this was an ongoing, political role for them as leaders. Their actions, therein, protected the partnership, the program, and the college by keeping the public informed and hopefully supportive of these dynamic offerings.

Evaluation

Evaluation refers to both the formal and informal processes through which formative and summative knowledge was created by partnership leaders to judge the worth or improve a particular, collaborative program (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1994). Formal evaluation pertained to authorized and systematic activities through which

organizational knowledge about the quality, merit or status of a phenomenon may be created (Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1994). Informal evaluation referred to the ongoing, casual processes through which sensemaking about an aspect of the quality, status, or progress of a program was done by the partnership leaders.

The respondents felt strongly that they, as program leaders, needed to have a realistic yet manageable perspective of the program's progress and quality for decision-making. While most respondents used formal strategies for student assessment in particular, they relied heavily on informal activities for much of the rest of their assessment needs. Christopher said, that to him evaluation, "...is kind of like a progress report. ...Everyday and after every session and every week, you're looking at it and saying, 'Is this right? Do we need to adjust something? ...What are the problems?' ...It's an ongoing evaluation and adjustment process." Nicola felt as did most respondents that, "We evaluate all the time. It doesn't have to be a big, formal thing. We know we need to know and act on what we know from day - to - day. We know what we need to do, what works for us."

Christopher agreed, adding that evaluation for him "...is an intuitive sense that I think should be trusted. People typically learn to suppress that, but...if it doesn't feel right then take a look at it...The more experience you have under your belt in doing this kind of thing the better you become at it." Most leaders talked about their "gut feeling" or ability to "sense when things are not quite right." They were very vocal in advising other leaders to develop and use this evaluative eye, especially as a cue to initiate systematic investigation.

Examples of informal, activities mentioned in the interviews included spontaneous moments in which problems or moments of interruption in the programming processes were recognized and selected for further study. Social conversations can be a way to gather valuable feedback with key stakeholders, such as that which Mitchell had with a key corporate leader en route to an airport:

> [He] had the opportunity…to come out and observe the course. At the end, ...I said, "Well, what do you think of the course? Is this a good course?" And he said, "Wow, Mitchell, that was fantastic. I can't believe how much I learned today!"

Unforeseen public acknowledgement, such as receiving explicit feedback in a forum designed with another agenda or receiving an award for excellence, was discussed by all respondents. This was felt to be a public seal of approval that was a nice comment on the quality, which they tried to build into the programs.

Spontaneous anecdotal reports, such as listening to the feelings and perceptions expressed in a spontaneous telephone call from a student, were considered a sound source of insider information. One leader, for instance, gave program students his home phone number so that they could call him after they graduated with technical questions. Although his "…wife thinks I should have a 1-900 number at home" he said he got realistic and ongoing feedback on the quality of the program by the type of questions asked and the frequency of calls. Others also did unplanned mini-phone surveys, while talking to stakeholders about totally different issues. Some reported that they collected useful feedback serendipitously at meetings conducted for other purposes. One commented that his corporate partner was a valuable source of information because the

business leader had access to corporate data. For example, one corporate leader informed the college partner as to the number of corporate service awards that went to his past students and the number of warranty claims the company's stakeholders have. From this, the college leader made deductions about his program's quality. For example, he inferred that if his graduates performed well then the number of claims against their employers should be low.

> Obviously if they [a retailer] have one claim after another, and they are the only retailer that is having problems in that warranty area, then it's maybe not a warranty problem. We know what the problems are with the product, and if all of a sudden you are [having problems] and nobody else is, [then] you're not doing something right.

Other forms of informal data collection included observation, such as dropping into a class session and watching the class, or serendipitously seeing a student apply theoretical knowledge learned in a practical and productive way at the job site.

No matter whether the evaluation discussed was formative or summative, all leaders commented on the need for developing a shared vision with a partner of where the partnership journey was heading. Nicola commented that she and her partners are a collaborative team, "We set up the benchmark for performance between the instructors, our industry partner, and us." This vision became the cornerstone for evaluation.

However, there were varying opinions on the need for accuracy in fleshing out this vision. For example, Arden felt an effort to set well-defined parameters, including evaluative milestones was very beneficial to program success and quality. "Communicate and stay involved. Use what you already have to best advantage. Set

goals and objectives up front. Be clear about what you define as success…Find that common ground, work at an agreement before you start."

Others qualified their comments supporting the need for a shared vision by describing how accuracy had to be balanced with reasonableness in its creation. This was because they felt that even the most precise conceptualization evolved over time, as the program went from planning to implementation. Some respondents began by building shared concepts of quality and performance. They were free to work out collaborative definitions of what constituted program quality and progress.

All leaders believed that change was a natural and healthy aspect of program growth. Even those, whose programs had very defined goals, objectives, and outcome standards commented on the need for ongoing adjustments or re-interpretations, as what was agreed upon initially between the two partners was translated into the program reality. As one leader mused:

> I think it's important to establish clear objectives going into the partnership. Although having said that, you also have to recognize that …in a lot of cases in the initial stages…things are not black and white, not cut and dried. Sometimes you have to just trust your instincts that it is going to come together. So while we all like to have all the i's dotted and the t's crossed, sometimes you just have to trust that it will develop as we go along.

Most leaders thought that the true meaning of quality and progress, as defined in specific objectives, emerged incrementally. They surmised that the leader's job was to work with his or her partner continuously to adapt as desired outcomes and standards of

performance, which guided the evaluative process, changed or became clearer. They agreed that as they formed a more trusting, open, and committed relationship with their business and industry partners, they felt that they became more aware of what was really needed and wanted by each other in the program versus what was truly realistic given the context of the partnership.

One leader commented that this included even defining and redefining yourself as an organization to your partner:

> It's tempting when you first start, I mean there's a lot of pressure and money to agree to do something, ...but as an educational provider your job is to meet the needs of the students. ...Be sure that you're both clear on...what you can realistically do for them. Now we both trust each other, we both have an understanding of where we're coming from.

Some other academic partners interviewed also believed that all facets of performance and programming had to be evaluated carefully, so that they maintained their identity as educators. They said that they deliberately assumed an ongoing personal relationship with their corporate counterparts to educate them on the role of the college. For them, time added a security and a confidence to their working relationship that benefited the program. As Mitchell reflected:

> I just look at it [now] as one world-the partnership. ...I think the success of the partnership is because of how integrated it is. I think the partners have to get involved. When Company C gets a new president or whatever the title is, I feel that it's important that he comes to the College, ...so he understands about it.

Most leaders, like Mitchell, agreed that the more in-depth this contact was the better. The resultant understanding gained by actually being in the trenches and participating in the program was a powerful, transformative experience for the partners. It gave them a united sense of identity and a grounded perspective that was unique from the non-partnership world. The inclusion of upper management in these collaborative experiences was vital because it prevented the program from being isolated from the political and operational worlds of the parent organizations. The understanding and support of management was critical when formal evaluative information was forwarded to them.

Most leaders felt that a comfortable working relationship with their partners supported the assessment of program quality and progress by facilitating the communication of information about existing concerns and potential problem areas. As such, they, like Christopher, worked at building a trusting relationship that permitted the sharing of negative evaluative feedback in a productive manner.

> I want them to share it with me. Even if it's something negative, I want them to call me and [say,] "Let's sit down and talk about this". ... I want my partner to feel comfortable in doing that.

Formative versus Summative. When asked about preferences in assessment, all respondents preferred formative evaluative strategies over summative. Most interviewees favoured these strategies to develop ongoing collaborative understanding of their programs. They felt that informal and formative methods worked best for them as a team, allowing them maximum flexibility, and control. As Christopher said, "...like

navigating a plane; you just keep adjusting your course as you go along." Several others saw evaluation as being a two part process: building complex, realistic, and shared understandings, and then applying these insights to the program immediately, as Arden said in "...finding solutions to problems or things we have to do to make the program better."

Other explanations offered stated that there were limited resources of time, staff, or energy for summative evaluation between program cycles, especially when high demand lead to fast turn-around times. In those cases, respondents felt that by the time summative evaluation was done, it would no longer be relevant to the context of the program in its next cycle. Also, observation was made that summative evaluation was good as an historical or political undertaking, even if it did not meet leadership needs. One leader, for example, said that the corporate partner had political motives for summative evaluation.

> The partner is planning to do...that [summative] evaluation. ...They [are] interested in publicizing this to other corporations, so that they can learn from the lessons that we have learned here in this partnership.

The respondent supported the altruistic goal of influence industry norms and practices in the field.

Quantitative versus Qualitative. Several respondents commented that they followed very precise objectives set forth by the corporate partner. These gave them benchmarks for success that were tied to specific, industry-wide, evaluative standards, such as a formal, written exam or professional assessment of work completed. These

leaders felt such evaluative standards were set by the corporate partner to reflect industry needs; they had to be highly specific and quantifiable. One leader said:

> In this particular case the objectives were clear from the very beginning…to get people trained so that they passed an exam and became accredited…so these were very measurable objectives. The testing mechanism that was used was an exam that was in fact prepared by the corporation. …This client was very clear on what they wanted and what they needed. They pretty much laid it out for us.

These leaders commented that the collaborative nature of the partnership was seen in this division of roles between the academic and corporate partners. The colleges crafted and delivered the instruction in support of the requisite corporate objectives and performance outcomes.

As savvy administrators, these leaders said they used the full resources of their colleges to continuously gather base information and data in systematic ways on their collaborative programming. This made them coordinate evaluative activities across departments. Examples given in the four interviews included statistics on the budgets, enrolments, frequency of delivery, preferred modes of delivery, requests for programming, completion and withdrawal rates, graduates, student satisfaction scales, certification exam grades, and post-graduation employment rates. The respondents said that these provided a foundation of largely quantitative data and information, which they then further categorized, synthesized, and interpreted to build evaluative knowledge.

All respondents, including those involved in professional programs, said they relied most heavily on qualitative approaches, when they were the lead investigators. As

one leader explained, "The statistical stuff is there, but we also for sure talk about the qualitative stuff. It's 'You know my sense is this' or 'Here are some of the comments I've heard back' or 'I think' or 'I feel' or all those kinds of things. ...I think they are very important." Those interviewed expressed their belief that qualitative strategies, including observation and semi-structured interviews, helped them develop meaningful and useful insights into program quality and progress at any given point in time. Arden, echoed the sentiments of most respondents, saying that casual interviews with the corporate partners gave her a deeper understanding of the quality of the program, which was akin to "...an ongoing, informal conversation". Christopher had good experiences with informal observation:

> It allows me to become more knowledgeable on the content that's being taught, to re-evaluate the instructor, to evaluate the culture of the organization through the reaction of the learners. ...I have a better understanding of what people are thinking and feeling. Did they embrace [the learning experience]? Did they not? Were there barriers to the learning? ...It gives me an opportunity to gather all this information, all this data, and put it to use.

He, like several other respondents, said that observation gave him valuable, first-hand information from which to build knowledge of program quality and progress. They supported observation as a tool for creating understanding and informing decision-making.

There was a strong sense from most respondents that the richest information for keeping track of the quality of program performance came directly from the stakeholders.

They said that they used their expertise and positions to actively seek their insights, especially from their most important stakeholders - their corporate partners and program students. All leaders identified a variety of other informants, including instructors, managers, advisory committee members, employers, and other primary and secondary stakeholders.

Other casual evaluative examples discussed that gave leaders a sense of program quality were actually taking the course or giving the course to another authority to teach and critique; hiring graduate students as program teachers or watching them rise in the corporate world; hearing favourable comment at conferences, in the media, or in the community; receiving requests from internal faculty or groups of faculty for help to develop collaborative programs of their own; or receiving requests for program design help from external sources, who had learned of the program's success through the community or business network.

All courses employed formal, student evaluation or satisfaction forms, which were highly valued as indicators of program quality. The number of positive evaluations was taken as evidence by half the respondents of the high quality of the programming, as it showed that the students gained what they wanted from the learning experience. However, one respondent was very vocal about the limited usefulness of the numerically scaled surveys. He felt that the open-ended response format of a student evaluation was the only part that actually collected personal feedback.

Barriers to Knowledge Generation

Barriers to knowledge generation refer to factors that hinder the generation of organizational knowledge, including evaluative. These are subdivided into three categories - contextual, structural, and procedural. Contextual barriers are situational factors, such as organizational strengths, culture, history, mandate, people skills, and interests that are barriers to knowledge creation. Structural barriers are infra-structural factors, such as power structure, budget, policies, accountability, and reporting frameworks that are barriers to knowledge creation. Procedural barriers are those action-oriented factors, such as defining roles and goals, conflict resolution, business plan creation that are barriers to knowledge creation.

Contextual. When asked about their evaluative experiences, all respondents mentioned barriers to assessment and considered contextual barriers as the most significant, especially cultural and ideological differences. These differences noted were internal, as well as, external to their home organization. One leader talked of how the corporate partners "...speak a different language than us. It's part of the business culture". This leader, like most interviewees, referred to the differing norms and expectations between colleges and business, especially regarding timelines for meeting specific performance objectives, as challenges to the creation of evaluative knowledge, especially that created in more formal or summative ways.

Internal, cultural barriers were noted by some respondents. These internal barriers caused problems especially when evaluative strategies or findings were presented to those in culturally dissimilar audiences. Leaders said they became proactive in adapting their oral and written reports or formal presentations to suit specific stakeholder groups. And lastly,

sometimes the contextual barriers to evaluation surfaced in a lack of resources. For example, another leader stated that, " In order to measure the change in behaviour…you have to do pre and post evaluations. And often the client doesn't want to invest that much time and energy into it." The leaders had to work with what they had available to them, and they were inventive in seeking alternative evaluative strategies, as reviewed previously in this chapter.

Structural. Two leaders found that structural barriers existed in their institutions. They both recounted examples of how their collaborative programming was inaccurately assessed using evaluation standards, which were designed for non-collaborative programming. Both leaders had re-educate those in authority as to why their programming appeared to do so poorly by traditional measures of success, when in fact they were very healthy. Two found that the communication infrastructure was a barrier for the program, in that there were multiple committee and approval processes, in order to modify programming to meet identified needs. Therefore, it took considerable patience, insider expertise, or sometimes even bold and non-collegial initiative to get round these barriers. As one related:

> Because of the nature of our work, it has to be very flexible, …a pretty quick reaction time. …When we try to get something going, our management at the College is sometimes a little slow to react because…you should talk to this committee, then executive, and then to academic council and so on. By the time you do all of that, it's too late for the industry. …And to be honest

with you on many occasions, we make the decision in here, and then told the senior management at the College about it [after we did it].

Procedural. There were very few references made to procedural barriers to the development of evaluative knowledge. One academic leader found it difficult initially to define the limits of leadership, especially as the program originator was on the program staff. Once the leader was experienced, the coordinator role was redefined as a participatory leadership. This change freed the leader to evaluate and modify the program to meet deficits identified, such as improving budget preparation procedures. Other references to procedural barriers were tied mostly to the structural barriers previously identified. For example, committees required formwork and summaries in a specific time sequence for desired changes to be accomplished. These forms and their time sequences did not meet the needs of the non-traditional programming. It took leaders' time and energy to get the needed changes through the approval process of the colleges concerned. This hampered evaluation and implementation of the recommendations.

Wisdom Gained

Wisdom gained referred to the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that the leaders felt they and their organizations developed as a direct result of the collaborative partnership. This main category was divided into two subcategories - individual and organizational. Individual wisdom referred to personal and professional growth that leaders identified that they had personally acquired through their participation in the partnership. The

organizational subcategory referred to the skills, knowledge, and attitudes gained by participating organizations, as the leaders shared their knowledge and experience internally.

Individual. All the leaders described how they had gained valuable expertise as a direct result of their participation with the program. Most, like Christopher, felt it was an experiential and collaborative learning opportunity.

> I guess it's a sharing experience. I learn from them as well. From each area, that I establish a relationship with I'm certainly learning back from them things I didn't know, and things I can use, develop, and take out to the corporate world.

Most leaders saw themselves creating and sharing, as well as, receiving knowledge. They believed that these were assets to be used at some future point to enhance their roles as collaborative leaders.

The majority of the leaders described building self-knowledge as a vital first step towards exemplary partnership programming. Arden suggested spending time in reflecting and planning, as a way to firm up the individual leader's self-knowledge:

> You should try to describe as much as you can up front, including what you mean by success and how you are going to measure it...You both have to have a shared idea of where this partnership is going and how to get there. You should have shared expectations and understandings. You need to spend time to do this in planning. That is critical. It can save you a lot of pain and frustration later on.

Almost all the leaders felt that this self-knowledge was one of their greatest strengths. Self-knowledge freed them to see their respective organizational and personal attributes as "complementary to each other not competitive." When shared, this knowledge helped all partners use the resources and expertise of each other more effectively in creating evaluative knowledge. Most college leaders felt this self-awareness helped them become more open to their corporate partners and more willing to take risks, as they appreciated that their partners shared their goal of creating a student-centered, high quality program.

Organizational. The community college leaders expressed that their individual learning was shared in their organizational knowledge base, and became a resource for others in the institution. Arden argued that, as such, her collaborative experiences and knowledge was transferable and transformative by pointing out that:

> The decision-making and evaluating skills you develop transfer into other aspects of your job. The experience that the College has with Program A will make it easier in one sense to plan and track a partnership...Knowing how to approach, communicate, and work cooperatively with business is something that is always valuable [because]...you can establish understanding faster.

Several leaders agreed that the knowledge was not static or situational. Christopher added that as he shared his insights, a transformation began that he felt was shifting the cultural and philosophical foundation of the institution towards an entrepreneurial model:

> With each partnership experience, ...the College becomes more client driven and less process and product driven. So, I think it's kind of a sharing experience. For me, it's kind of, like I know how this works. ...For the College, it's kind of a new road that we're going down. With each success that we have, I find that people in the College and the College itself is embracing it.

Several respondents described themselves as change agents within their academic communities, communicating his collaborative insights, attitudes, and skills, so they became increasingly a part of the long-term culture and ideology of his institution.

Sometimes the leaders said that they saw the fruit of this transformation in very concrete ways. For example, one leader's decision, arising from evaluation, to have a policy on drugs and alcohol changed college-wide guidelines:

> It started in our partnership...The policy that we had [developed collaboratively] for our partnership went to my upper management. It became a situation where they discussed are we going to have a policy just for this program...or are we going to have it right through the whole college?

Corporate Leaders' Opinions

Leader Roles and Responsibilities

All but two of the five business-industry leaders interviewed felt that their connection to their collaborative program was the direct result of their job title and authority. The two dissenters were the program originators. Their passionate interest in

the content area made their programs a reality; they sought to have the program associated with their positions within their companies.

In-house. All leaders had diverse responsibilities, dependent on the needs of each specific partnership. Comments on the range of duties for which they were accountable, included those, which were primarily administrative in nature, such as budget supervision, scheduling, record keeping, supplying materials and form-work, arranging training facilities, and coordinating necessary liaisons both externally and internally to their companies. Responsibilities also included duties that were in the realm of promotion, such as preparing and making presentations that promoted the program to internal and external stakeholders or acting as liaisons with various groups inside the organization and the corporate family sphere.

Other duties commented upon were more instructional, such as writing curriculum, teaching sections or all of a course, grading exams or otherwise evaluating student work. And finally, many tasks mentioned were managerial, such as reporting to senior management, evaluating program success and quality, hiring and supervising staff, budget preparation, program design, drafting business plans or contracts, visioning, and conflict resolution.

Partnership. Several leaders pointed out that they tried to maintain their company's image and reputation with all stakeholders, especially those in the corporate sphere. References were made to diverse groups that these leaders considered important for a variety of reasons. These included corporate manufacturers and affiliates,

professional groups, and regulatory bodies. For example, Stewart MacKenzie took special pride in being a visionary; he felt it was an integral part of his leadership role because he was heavily involved in the long range program planning and promotion of the program. Consequently, he pointed out that he was in extensive communication with a diverse body of stakeholders from government departments and professional groups to unions in order to share and receive knowledge with which to support program's progress and quality.

Not all corporate respondents performed all duties listed or thought all that they did do were equally important. Some felt that a vital facet of their positions was best described as that of interpreter-negotiator. They felt that this was noteworthy because that was how they communicated the needs and developing trends of the marketplace to their college partners. The leaders also added that this enabled them to work together more effectively to ensure that program responsiveness to identified concerns, opportunities, or trends. For example, one leader described himself as " ...the middle guy...I call it the 'make it happen'. [I] remove obstacles one by one...[My job] is a negotiator position...to keep working on understanding, getting around these issues that we see." Comment was made that as interpreters, they represented their companies' interests in the partnership, and this duty included building understanding of what was meant by program quality and progress between various stakeholders. Therefore, they said they devoted significant time seeking and giving feedback pertinent to the program among vested interest groups, especially the students.

Most of the leaders said they knew they had the confidence of their organizations to judge quality and progress, as well as, make decisions because of the degree of

autonomy they were given in their collaborative projects. They believed that this was a natural outgrowth of their recognized expertise. Tomas Quintara concluded:

> I've pretty well been running independently. ...I think that [if there was] something I was expected to resolve...I did. ...With regards to my direct supervisor, ...I had her support...[and] I would keep her and her colleagues involved. ...I would sort of keep her informed on overall results, but not day to day issues I saw and dealt with in the program.

He, like some other interviewees, was of the opinion that they had the responsibility and authority to evaluate the program on an ongoing basis and make decisions, if warranted, to deal with concerns in a timely manner. They believed that they had the backing of their senior administration in this regard. They also remarked on the chains of command through which their insights about program quality and progress flowed.

Most leaders commented that these aspects of their jobs were highly political, especially the maintenance or establishment of internal and external relationships to promote understanding of the partnership program. For example, Lyndon Ryan recounted his experience in team building within the partnership:

> This year before we started, we went up to the College B again and met with the program leadership and the instructors. [I]...walked around and basically had a chat with everyone, right from the mechanic to the guy, who's driving the truck, [so]...everybody is comfortable and feels part of each other.

Several leaders reflected that one benefit of this was that the bond between the partners supported problem solving or conflict resolution. They said that their

relationship generated mutual trust and facilitated dialogue between the parties. For them, it was a situation where identified issues could be addressed with total honesty. As one leader reflected:

> We're past the stage of being polite. I think one of our successes is the ability to have this openness and candour without worrying unnecessarily about feelings. We hit the issues head on.

They felt that they had a common understanding and history that ensured acceptance and faith in each other. This led to a collaborative, problem-solving environment, where the issue was never to assign blame, but rather strive together at reaching reasonable solutions that worked for all parties.

Another aspect of leadership discussed in the interviews revolved around the movement of evaluative knowledge within and outside of the partnership. Internally this would typically involve senior management, as Lyndon recalled, "I sit down with them and discuss program progress…what's happened and what controls I'm putting in place, who I'm going to be talking to, and that sort of thing." Sometimes, the knowledge transfer involved other company departments, where evaluative reports, photos, and other materials prepared as a result of the program were used by other areas of the company as a reference to inform and guide future "…estimating and design work". Other times the leaders described themselves seeking information for evaluative purposes. Gordon Dell explained his experience: "I've been contacting [and]…visiting people, shaking hands, saying, 'What have you been working on? Where is it going? Can you tell me about any changes?' " Donald Jarrett pointed out that even the partnership itself could become a valuable, evaluative resource for other stakeholders. They judged their training and

development product against his program model, basing their evaluation on the insights that he shared with them about his program. His program became "...sort of a blueprint for one corporate associate. ...I understand that they are trying to set up similar partnerships around the world, as they become a global player."

The respondents also described that the organizational and individual knowledge gained by either themselves or their organizations as useful in helping them to explore new ventures or improve future performance. One leader extended this to become involved in industry-wide research linked to his program. And certainly all leaders talked very positively of the incredible learning, which they had seen in program participants and the positive effects of that learning for their organizations and various stakeholders. In this, most said that they thought that they had a significant responsibility to maximize knowledge transference from the program to the job-site. This was a key indicator of program quality for them. One leader said that to do the leadership task he had to draw on all aspects of his life experience. "It comes working as a technician, ...being at a school bench, ...going through a bachelors and a masters, ...then going back [to school]. I know what [students]...want, and how they want it. I've got a pretty good feeling about that."

Others said they were so concerned about quality and transference that they assumed a lead instructional design and evaluative role. For example, Tomas stated:

> I did determine early on that we wanted to have full control of the professional competency process, so in that way we could not only monitor the training, monitor the knowledge out there, but also set the standards. ...[I] said, 'This is what I want you to teach...and these are

some examples that you may wish to draw on.' That was something that I felt that I wanted to see because we are setting the industry standards, and we knew exactly what we wanted.

As representatives of their industries, these leaders said they began their projects with a clear vision of what they needed to see in the program. They felt that they had either specific liabilities or a unique expertise that were sound reasons, as to why they had to have a significant influence on the educational process and content. They believed it was their professional duty to shape the curriculum, outcome standards, and the evaluative instruments used. Quality measures became more formal and quantitative as human safety and liability became higher risks. One leader said loss management evaluation was a critical part of his job:

> It is part of due diligence. Well God forbid, but if something goes wrong, someone is going to come and look for the paperwork. They'll say: "Demonstrate to me that you've done this, you've done that, you've done everything you could possibly do to try and minimalize the risk".

Therefore, some felt it a key responsibility to educate stakeholders, especially the participants, on the realities of their industry. This was complicated for some respondents because they felt that their programs could not copy the authenticity of the workplace in full detail. As one leader pointed out, even exemplary program leaders have to work around this limitation:

> We have what we would consider a state of the art facility...where they learn and that's where they train. That's not necessarily the reality of the

world that they deal with once they leave the College. ...This is a common concern.

Consequently, some leaders felt that they had to continuously search for ways to evaluate, find discrepancies, and explain them to specific stakeholders, thereby ensuring their ongoing participation or support.

Leadership Attributes

Personal. In terms of soft skills, the interviewees referred to many attributes that helped them maintain program quality and progress. Not all were mentioned by all respondents. Comments were made about communication, decision making and problem solving, confidence, patience, a sense of fun, teamwork skills, flexibility, adaptability, trust, moral values (honesty and truthfulness), curiosity, empathy, judgement, attentiveness, humility, ability and interest in learning, imagination, commitment, optimism, enthusiasm, as well as, a sincere caring and respect for the primary stakeholders, especially the college and the students. Of these, the ones most deeply and frequently described were communication, attentiveness, judgement, imagination, commitment, adaptability, caring and respectfulness, and problem solving and decision-making skills.

Most leaders said that they used their communication skills to perform almost all aspects of their leadership role, especially planning, evaluation, and problem solving. They used their personal ability to communicate openly with their partners in order to develop trust and empathy. The preferred format was face-to-face communication. Most

said that they preferred to work one-on-one with the parties concerned and avoid written or less personal forms of communication. Tomas recalled:

> I worked quite a bit [face-to-face] with the lead instructor and the one, who was responsible for preparation of the classroom guide. ...I put them in touch with some of our product experts. I also had a lot of contact...with Christopher Casel. ...I talk a lot with...our corporate stakeholders.

They said that their efforts as communicators allowed them to identify and work to overcome their individual and organizational strengths or weaknesses, offer evaluative feedback, and set goals or objectives. Most respondents felt that a prerequisite to communicating with each other was that they understood their own organization's weaknesses, strengths, and culture first. This was so they could relate all aspects of the partnership to their home institutional missions and mandates. They said that this was essential, as they were the representatives of their organizations at the partnership table. As Donald reflected:

> ...Recognize what you're good at and recognize what you're not good at. Where you can develop the skills yourself, develop them. Where you don't have the expertise, go out and try to find the best that you can. ...We don't profess to be educators. We have a general idea of what we need as an end result, and we allow them to help us get there."

Most leaders said that they needed to communicate as complete a portion of the pertinent knowledge of their companies to others involved in order to make the partnership work most effectively. Lyndon said this gave stakeholders "buy-in" and

made them a part of the "...big picture, [wherein] they feel like they're doing something worthwhile and contributing something." Consequently, some felt that that leaders should be hypersensitive to language and communication styles in order to get their point across in a productive way. This was thought to be especially important when attempting to implement needed changes or clarify misunderstandings about program quality or work performance for as one leader put it, "I would go out and discuss issues ...not as a negative thing, but...[as] an opportunity for improvement. ...[Face-to-face] gives everyone a chance to communicate. A lot of times people think they are doing the right thing."

Another attribute that was seen as invaluable was the ability to make decisions and solve problems by first of all recognizing that there is an issue that warrants attention; planning and seeking strategies to explore the issue, if appropriate; collecting or supervising the collection of data and information; categorizing, synthesizing, and integrating information; and finally, if deciding whether their immediate intervention was necessary, choosing a course of action. As Stewart MacKenzie recollected, " ...I just can't go simply to a calculator or a spreadsheet and see the answer there. I have to be able to think in flexible ways - be creative. Problems don't often repeat, they're not cloned." All leaders recounted instances where they were required to make multiple, continuous, simple, and complex decisions of an evaluative nature that influenced program quality and progress. These included decisions affected virtually all aspects of the program, including evaluation itself, content, instruction, format, delivery, costing, and promotion. Many respondents said that many decisions, especially the larger ones, were collaborative. For example, Donald explained that, "We want to be part of the

solution. I think that's more important than issuing the problem and saying…you fix it. We would work with them in trying to come up with a solution."

Imagination, tempered with organizational skills, was also commented on by some respondents. This characteristic they said gave them the ability to see beyond the uncertainty of the program beginnings and have a sense of where they and their partners were going throughout implementation and evaluation. Gordon said that the ideal collaborative head should be able to put the imagined vision into reality, "Someone who can think outside the box, and who can see the steps to make the vision real. Half the time we don't know the exact goal. …We need to take steps to get there. You will continually readjust as your goal becomes clearer." Some felt that their commitment and enthusiasm for their product, program, and company gave them a constant sense of who they were and what the program was all about as they moved from the vision through planning, implementation, and evaluation. This included in two cases, linking the quality and success of the program to provincial and national socio-economic health.

Several respondents also pointed out commitment. Some leaders used phrases like "my full-time hobby," "a very good place to work," "very emotionally charged…an extension of the customer," "a caring place, where we're all in it together," or "a passion" to describe the commitment they felt to their product, program, or company. Stewart described this leadership attribute as being someone who "… really takes an interest and wants to do something to keep it alive." Gordon supported this by saying that thought his partnership was like "…a small family. It's very much like they [the College partners] are your friends. …That's what it feels like."

In the interviews, most leaders linked attentiveness and judgement with evaluation. They felt that they were accountable for the success and progress of the program and as such needed to holistically understand what was occurring. Their ability to note interruptions and potential problems in the overall flow of the program or encourage others to bring forth their observations. As one Lyndon describes it, "You have to keep evaluation [continually] in the back of your mind." All leaders described ways in which attempted to be vigilant in this regard.

Most interviewees also strongly supported the need to be adaptable or flexible in all aspects of evaluation. For example, Tomas recalled his experience in modifying aspects of student assessment:

> We said that they [in one stakeholder group] and...[others] with a certain type and amount of work experience could bypass the training by writing our professional competency exam. ...[Lots]...are continuing to challenge.

He said he felt it was necessary to provide flexibility in program evaluation with regards to meeting outcome performance indicators in order to be responsive to these diverse stakeholder needs. Another leader said adaptability allowed them to modify the original program and greatly expand the audience base:

> We used to run two multi-month courses. ...Getting the folks to come in the spring was always a challenge, ...so we worked with [stakeholders]...and basically took these different modules of the multi-month course, broke them up, and offered them in the spring. That's an example of where we were able to upgrade the program.

Several leaders commented that they were pleased to work with community colleges because their willingness to be flexible in defining quality in collaborative programming, especially as compared to universities. One leader explained:

> If you get to some of these more higher learning institutions, you get this pre-determined definition of what education is, and it's the ability to know how to think. We want to be able to do that too, but our...participants [must] have learned a skill set, demonstrate [it], ...and be confident ...[to] grow in that skill set.

Other comments from interviewees were that some had had poor past experiences with universities and other college providers, who were either too assertive or close-minded about what constitutes quality training and development for business. Most respondents said the key was finding a responsive college, who was confident about taking the challenge of providing quality collaborative programming, and supported their claims with continuous evaluation of and adaptation to learner needs. Stewart noted that this reflected the reality of the corporate world, when "The technology is high end [and]...your [employees] need to keep up with that. This [constant updating of training] has to take place."

Some felt that attention should be paid to ethical values, such as their partners' attitudes towards integrity, confidentiality, human worth and dignity, honesty, or fairness and justice. They felt that these strongly influence program attitudes towards work-related issues such as loss management, accountability, quality, and collaboration. For example, Stewart described how he approached the program's evaluation by "...leading

with my values, my principles, and the company's guiding principles. That's what I used."

These comments on ethics were often linked to how leaders need to place emphasis on caring about stakeholders, especially students and teachers. Most respondents expressed their sincere support and deep respect for their collegiate partners. Most said that they were very pleased and lucky to have, as Lyndon put it, the "privilege of working" with such talented and knowledgeable people, especially the instructors who were the "real cornerstone of the whole program". Donald said that a warm "personal relationship" from the senior levels of the two organizations trickled downward. Their liaison was the "meat and potatoes" of the partnership, which unified the "common will" of the organizations to sustain the program's support and bolster shared understandings of what program quality and progress were.

Technical. The leaders identified many technical and personal leadership characteristics needed to be what one respondent jokingly called a "professional collaborator". The technical attributes of the leaders were seen as valuable in programs, where there was a direct connection between the explicit knowledge taught and that needed by the organization. For example in partnerships, where a professional certification was given, the technical knowledge and skills of the leaders enabled them to be active collaborators. They said they got involved in curriculum content and design, evaluation, program promotion, or teaching. Tomas commented, "I don't think we would have been as successful; if I didn't have that developmental background, as well as, the previous business background."

The worth of other technical attributes varied tremendously from leader to leader. Examples noted were knowledge of specific databases, various types of computers or peripheries, accounting or word processing packages, electronic mail, the Internet, presentation software, network systems, or photographic equipment. These were described by respondents as tools for communication, the categorization and recording of data and information, or systems' control. For example, Gordon recalled a typical day as technology-supported:

> The first thing I do…is obviously [that] I open up my Microsoft Outlook, where I can access my e-mail. The second thing I do is open up Explorer and go to the…[corporate] website. …I log in. …This is where I can get anything I need. …I can maintain that database.

Stakeholders

All respondents referred to multiple stakeholders to whom they were accountable. Examples referenced were: program staff; corporate and collegiate peers; other internal employees, who work in areas unrelated to the program; subordinates, such as monitors; provincial and federal committees or think tanks; other provincial businesses or trades organizations; specific community groups; and other private providers; individuals whom the leader was mentoring professionally; unions and professional affiliates; and most importantly, program students (past, current, prospective).

Each respondent identified the primary stakeholders as the program learners and their college partners. Their vested interest was tied to the costs that they incurred while

participating in the program. Tomas commented that "Our stakeholders...need value for their training dollars" to emphasize the importance of this investment. They were also important because they helped influence organizational participation in collaborative programming, as Stewart said, "You could put out all the information you want, but the best sales person is the person sitting around a lunch room at work talking about it and generating interest." In addition, the respondents said that they felt that their senior management was a key audience that they had to be attentive to since they had held the ultimate authority for the partnership and they served the program in a broader political arena.

Several leaders commented at length on the wider societal audience that benefited from their programming either because their offerings empowered the participants to become life-long learners or because the skills, knowledge, and attitudes, which the students learned in the programs contributed to other corporate interests. Stewart commented that he saw it as an individualistic and transformative experience because "...much of the teaching that goes on in the class is from the students to each other and the instructor. It's engaging!" Some comment was made that the students' ability to be assimilated into the corporate culture, for example a culture of safety, helped that individual student, as well as, others for whom he or she might work. In addition, this helped society prosper by that individual's continued contribution in the work force. Lyndon summarized his discussion of those points saying,

> The other benefit, as I said, was enforcing the loss management, ...safety, and well being. ...Maybe Company B won't get [the benefit directly], but

wherever they go, hopefully we've put it into their minds that safety is number one.

Evaluation

Respondents offered comments on the value of evaluation to program quality and progress. All identified themselves as having a significant role in assessing the merits of the program and, in some cases, even evaluated the students and their work. Opinions were offered on the value of formal and informal, summative and formative, as well as, quantitative versus qualitative strategies. Most felt that evaluation was simply a tool to gain a useful and reasonable understanding of the program's overall progress and quality. In this, they said that evaluation was not simply gathering data and generating insights, but rather it was also sharing this knowledge, and acting on recommendations to solve problems or seek improvement. For example, Gordon commented that, "...Evaluating is more of an issue as to where we [as a partnership] are going next, knowing things to make decisions."

Whether formal or informal, qualitative or quantitative, some leaders contended that evaluation was a political act because it involved organizations with divergent interests, capabilities, and cultures. Gordon advised that, "Before you evaluate you have to understand each other's needs, each other's capacity. ...You have to be able to say, 'Let's stop. Let's compromise. Let's make it happen.' " These corporate leaders felt that evaluation should begin with communication and knowledge-sharing to identify values, beliefs, and philosophies towards evaluation and quality.

They contend that this intellectual process must precede any evaluative action. What one leader described with dramatic flourishes as the "push and pull" of healthy debate was thought by several to be a sensible way to clear the air and crystallize goals and objectives for evaluation. Consequently, they felt that the need to evaluate just for evaluation sake was not as important as gaining knowledge within a personal and an organizational framework. Thus, understanding the weaknesses, strengths, interests, and needs of the partnering organization made any evaluative activities they considered potentially more productive and acceptable to stakeholders.

Formative versus Summative. Most comments supported formative not summative evaluation, as the central form of assessment used by leaders. Respondents, involved in partnership programs where loss management or professional certification were issues, also reflected the need for more formalized evaluation, formatively and in one case summatively. These leaders expressed that for them many aspects of evaluation were already structured within professional standards and operating norms.

Activities and instruments discussed were the use of scaled tests; professional assessment of skill sets and work completed using numerical templates and performance grids or check-lists for scoring and formative record-keeping; systematic reports on specific aspects of the program, such as near-miss incidents, equipment usage, equipment repair, or safety infractions; instructor certification and training schedule updates; cost-production analysis; and, audits (external and internal, as well as, mandatory and voluntary). The respondents linked the intensity of the formal, ongoing evaluative activities that they performed to the potential for injury and equipment misuse or damage.

For example, Lyndon said that he had experienced diverse internal and external evaluations because they were tied to his corporate loss management controls:

> ...An internal [loss management] audit group that will come in...We audit ourselves...and sometimes we even audit each other [individually]. We could [also] have someone from another department come in [and]...we've hired an outside [loss management professional] group to come in...It's good for me and it's good for everybody. If I'm weak in some area or I'm not doing something [I should be], I'm the first one who wants to know about it.

As a coordinator in a high risk environment Jack said that self, peer, joint, and external evaluation were valuable learning tools that can inform and spur individual and program improvement. They also fulfilled his mandated need to perform formative and summative assessments.

Leaders identified specific types or depths of evaluative knowledge for different stakeholders. The evaluative wisdom had to be tailored to suit specific audience needs and expectations. For example, Tomas recalled his senior management's role and wants: "They have direct ties [on a daily basis] to the stakeholder community...My boss is heavily involved with that aspect of things." He, like other respondents, knew the insights he passed on to administration equipped them to work more effectively on behalf of the corporation and the partnership.

This sensitivity extended to the formatting or packaging of evaluative insights for each audience. Leaders reported that they had to modify the knowledge or make it meaningful by giving it to stakeholders in a way that they could readily understand and

use. Examples given included following standardized evaluative formats, already in use within the company such as computer-based templates; formal, written reports; formal presentations; pictorial records; and informal updates, delivered either orally or via email. Frequently, the leaders described how the forum influenced the format of the information, as much as the stakeholders did. For example, Lyndon described both informal and formal meetings, where oral feedback was preferred.

> In our team meetings actually, ...one of the agenda items is to talk about what you're doing and what programs you're working on right now. So, you get to pass that [knowledge] on to everyone that you're working with.

Quantitative versus Qualitative. Quantitative evaluation was more prevalent, as discussed previously, in formal and summative assessment, especially student evaluation. In environments with high risk for student safety, more formal and quantitative assessment became more prevalent. However, even in this situation, the leaders made room for qualitative and informal evaluative opportunities, especially as it related to their own decision and sense-making. One leader commented that journal writing helped him maintain a qualitative record of his observations that he kept:

> ...mostly in my own personal book. That's where I keep a daily record of what I think my observations for myself. Some of it does come out in reports...but a lot of that stuff I keep in my own personal diary for my use. ...You keep records of little observations and sometimes it comes up that you have go flip back through your book and "Oh yeah, here it is here, and here it is here again." ...I guess it's

time to have a talk. ...It's not always negative reinforcement. You make notes of good things too when you see them and ideas [you have].

Some leaders believed that a more informal and qualitative evaluation methods worked best for them in a collaborative environment as it allowed them maximum flexibility and control, giving them a more truthful and useful sense of what is going on at any particular time. For instance, Stewart echoed comments made by several others, when he said that he relied heavily on his intuitive ability to informally and qualitatively evaluate:

> I guess scientifically my barometer is how I feel about it. If you ask me for solid, hard data, well that to me is as solid as it gets. If somebody can show me that his or her evaluation tool can do that for me, hell let me know. ...I can't measure [quality and value]...in [quantifiable] terms like dollars and cents. I can't measure most of what we do that way.

More informal, qualitative evaluation approaches or indicators mentioned included: casual observation; reflective journal writing; use of secondary evidence, such as feedback at conferences or meetings scheduled for other purposes, or reports in the media, or comment spontaneously offered from peers or management in passing; the receipt of awards; informal unstructured interviews; committed and ongoing action from other interested groups in adopting the program; as well as, unsolicited student narratives and employer testimonials. One business leader described his experience helping teach his collaborative program as an ethnographic investigation:

> ...It's a lot of work. I need to sit down every night and learn about the stuff, how to present it. ...I don't want to do it everyday, ...but it does

> give me a different perspective. I know what they go through. I know exactly. ... And that's probably the best evaluation that there is. ...You know where the system works and where the flaws are. I know what the heart [of the program] is.

Other comments supported this need for intense (longer term and highly integrated) exposure to the program setting, in order to get a grounded sense of the major issues influencing the program.

More formal strategies for seeking qualitative information included: structured or semi-structured focus groups; random and purposefully sampled phone surveys; case study discussions with students and teachers for analysis of poor quality performance, as in a near-miss or critical incident report; meetings, where the program quality or progress was on the agenda; open response sections of student evaluations; and creating pictorial logs or video-taped histories. For example, Lyndon relied on digital photography to record evaluative data on compact disks that became part of a permanent, evaluative portfolio on the project for organizational learning and archival record:

> Whoever was going out would grab the camera, myself or whoever, and make sure they got a couple of shots. ...The photos are for our use and College B, but as well, they are for...our engineers. ...They that part of our team would probably pass it off to their supervisors and their managers. It's kept as documentation too for future work. ...They refer back. ...It would help them do their estimating and design work a little bit better as well.

Leaders reported that they sought information from many informants to feed what Gordon called his "gut feeling" and others referred to as "intuition" as program decision-maker and evaluator; not all leaders used the same sources. The list included their partners (leaders and managers), peers, managers, instructors, students (past, current and prospective), volunteers, government agencies and committees, professional groups (provincial, national, and international), private affiliates and suppliers, community groups, unions, provincial committees, or subordinates.

Most interviewees said that they got their richest information about the reality of the program from those people involved and not more quantifiable sources, such as statistical databases. Tomas thought that, "I find you get depth when you do one to one follow-ups. ...Doing it with enough people, even if it's a small number like 10% of the participant group, I think gives me a pretty good feeling of what students felt about that particular training." They said that this approach costs them in terms of time, money, and energy, but as effective leaders, they had to actively seek those insights. For example, one leader used considerable resources to establish an inter-provincial advisory council and stage a series of national focus groups. Another visited the program daily to observe instruction and student work. Another facilitated informal lunch hour discussions on the company's culture of safety and quality, as well as, collect evaluative feedback. Still another spent days on the road doing informal, unstructured interviews and formal semi-structured focus groups with a variety of stakeholders. One respondent provided an example of how powerful this personal feedback was to him, as an evaluator of program value and quality:

> He was awkward. " I don't know why I have to take this. I don't want to be here." I said, "...In three weeks, ...I'll come back to you and you tell me what you think". ...When I did come back, I could see he was just dancing in his seat. ...He told me ...that he had read a [book]. ...He proceeded to tell me how far off base it was - poorly written! He said he...hadn't picked up a book in ...years. He also told me a week later...that there was a...First Aide course that he had avoided, ...[and] after the program...he signed up...and passed with 100%. So, if you look at what's the magic with program, the real magic is the development of competence and self-esteem. It's there!

While student evaluations were considered useful by some, others commented that they felt they were fairly poor ways to gather feedback on a program unless they offered significant room for qualitative feedback. Purely quantitative forms were described by one leader as being, "...black and white and see [ing] in only one dimension. It's basically the answer to the question that you've asked without any real feedback."

Barriers to Knowledge Generation

Contextual. When asked about their evaluative experiences, most leaders identified contextual barriers as the most problematic for developing knowledge about progress and success of their programs, as well as, implementing recommended changes. Some said that there were differences between academic and business culture that were

surprising or even ironic at times, especially as colleges try to become more entrepreneurial. For example, one leader reflected that:

> It's a test at times. ...It sometimes is negative. ...The agenda of the college is ensure that the seats are full [and], ...the program is being offered and fully subscribed. Our agenda is making sure that we have the right courses with the right instructors [to]...basically communicate what needs to be communicated to the students. It is a cultural difference.

As in this case, two leaders commented that the colleges sometimes appeared more entrepreneurial or aggressive than the private provider did. One leader commented that program quality was potentially at risk because of the rush to secure collaboration with the private sector:

> There's a lot of things that get said in the heat of the moment and when the heat of the moment is over, it's a little more difficult to make a reality of it. Those sorts of things can really leave a bad taste, and have a detrimental effect on the relationship. ...The output has to be clearly measurable and the quality has to be understood. Both parties have to know what the expectations are. It's not rocket science I guess. ...You sort of build the building, but you've got to know what the building is going to look like first.

He felt that attention must be paid to determining what each party defines as quality and what each considers appropriate processes and timelines in reaching this predetermined level of achievement in order to avoid misunderstandings. The leader recommended the development of a business plan for a prospective partnership, which would include a

mission and mandate for the venture, specific definitions of quality, and a detailed plan of evaluation for assessing the program's quality and progress.

Another leader agreed that businesses became more involved in the collaborative programming at colleges, corporate connection between accountability and quality training and development would become more accepted in the postsecondary world. This was from his perspective a good thing for the quality of adult learning because it would discourage those providers for whom money and not students' learning was the primary motivation for collaboration. "It's a whole different mindset when somebody [like government] is handing you money, compared to when you really have to justify...be creative - strategic about how you're going to do that." This transference will also give postsecondary providers a glimpse into the reality of the global marketplace. This allowed their students to be better future employees in the Canadian marketplace.

Several respondents commented that partners needed to respect and actively honour the dignity of the learners, as knowledge experts in their own right. They felt as did most respondents that the programs' participants were valuable assets to corporate viability and success. Training and developing these individuals was critical to long range strategic planning:

> A number of years ago it became evident to us...that the need to come up with qualified staff was going to become more and more of an issue long term, and in looking around at the available [training and development] sources it didn't take very long for us to realize that there wasn't a lot out there.

Another issue brought forth revolved around the nature of the stakeholder from whom information is sought, some being intimidated by evaluative activities. For example, one respondent said that his program participants "...hated to be judged"; another rewarded feedback on things that impeded program quality with prizes such as "a lunch tin or a thermos bottle"; and, still another said differing ideas of what constituted quality were a problem for getting reliable feedback.

Other issues revolved around resources required for evaluative activities and the constraints in which programming and leaders operated. Of special note were the number of comments on the diversity and breadth of leader roles. Their ability to manage multiple projects, meet deadlines, and perform evaluation was seen by several as a logistical stress test. As one leader succinctly described the frenetic pace of collaborative leadership:

> No, we didn't have time for [summative program evaluation after the first round of implementation]...There was no breathing time. Plus...I think I must have marked and handed out fourteen to fifteen hundred exams in that time! We had, in terms of implementation of the new product system, some very strict timelines. ...All of those targets were fixed and immovable. I mean [second round of the program] had to go no matter what.

The leaders were very clear that evaluative strategies had to conform to the realities of their work world, including the manpower, money, expertise, and interest at a given point in the program life-span. As needs were identified, then planning could be done to incorporate specific activities. One comment made clarified how this worked:

> We had envisioned from the very beginning that we would have to build in a [post-graduation] audit or evaluation component. ...However with our limited resources and time, we didn't have something in place when we rolled out. In fact we're now in the process of working with a consultant, and we're...at the third draft stage.

Structural. There were some problems identified in getting insights into the progress and quality of the program, which were linked to the policies and reporting frameworks of the colleges. One leader admitted:

> We know we think as a privately owned company, where people work fifty-two weeks a year. Here we have different...ways of participating and doing things. ...It takes a lot longer in an educational institution than it does in a business environment. ...We go through step-by-step to eliminate every barrier [and] every one of these things we'll discuss.

Some leaders said that they had to be hypersensitive to these differences as they work on behalf of the program to secure mutually beneficial solutions to issues that arise. They thought that a team-based, participatory approach to problem solving was most helpful in this regard. One commented that it was a new experience for the postsecondary provider, as the collegiate culture did not really have "flat" authority structures with "individually accountable" and truly "empowered" employees.

Other comments referred to difficulties associated with reporting frameworks for major decision-making, as well as, frustrating budgetary or human resource policies. They felt they had to exhibit persistence and considerable patience in seeking needed

changes in the attitudes, structures, and procedures of the colleges, so that their innovative, team-based businesses could work effectively with the more traditional and hierarchical community colleges.

Procedural. Procedural problems were issues for several corporate respondents. They felt that if there were better and more formal instruments then they would use them. The problem as they saw it was that evaluative instruments, currently on the market, were simply not designed to meet their information needs. As one leader commented:

> It's just part of the culture and the nature of the business. There is terminology for it that's basically "things need to be timed, bound, and measurable." ...Trying to come up with a measurement method is tough. In some cases, you waste more time trying to come up with a measurement method and so you don't do it. That doesn't mean it's off the radar. It means you haven't quite found the right way of doing it. ...It is relatively easy to measure the success through word of mouth, from the returned evaluations that are done, by the fact that we continually have people attending the courses.

They felt very sensitive to the need to build accountability measures into organizational products, processes, or structures; evaluation was a key part of this ethic. The leaders lamented the difficulty in finding appropriate evaluative measures and the potential waste of valuable corporate resources in securing better measures for evaluation. The qualitative evaluative approaches quoted were in part a compromise. They offered rich feedback that was convenient and inexpensive, and could be used with minimum effort to

generate organizational knowledge about the quality and success of the partnership. None-the-less, several respondents saw overcoming the instrument barrier to be an ongoing, expensive, time-consuming, and energy draining process, especially when consultants and, therefore less-knowledgeable program outsiders, were involved.

Wisdom Gained

Individual. In the last interview question, when asked about the learning they obtained through evaluation, all leaders said that they learned and shared their wisdom with others, as a result of their leadership roles in their programs. Individual learning was very diverse and included technical, humanistic, administrative, and ideological insights. For example, comment was made by one leader that he learned, as a result of the program affiliation, just how important his own philosophy towards learning was to him, as a professional. Lyndon mentioned technical knowledge as his program instructors, "...give you ideas about the equipment and what the equipment can do." In addition, several respondents felt that they also gained a real sense of the world of adult education and collaboration. They said that these insights would help them form better, future postsecondary partnerships or improve their current collaborative relationships. As Stewart put it, "...whatever I learn in my dealings with any one of these groups, whatever I learned from this one I carry over to that one."

Other comments were that their personal learning was directly applicable to their leadership role, as they honed their communication, evaluative, or planning skills. Gordon felt strongly that his evaluative and decision-making experiences helped him evolve as a manager. He explained:

> The more you do it, the more you are developing expertise. ...Your intuition gets better too. You may still guess wrong despite everything you know. You may end up saying, "We shouldn't have done that". ...You need to walk in the shoes.

As such, several leaders called their collaborative experiences a form of "professional development". Some respondents stated that their ability to perform and learn on this venture made it more likely that they would be asked to participate or even lead future training and development projects. Therefore, they felt that their companies recognized the value of their experiences.

Organizational. As knowledge sharers, most respondents were vocal in the learning their organizations had done as a result of being involved in the partnership program. Some made comments that testing and building individual knowledge occurred best in groups, and that its usefulness was best seen by sharing it with others. Interviewees indicated that they had both formal and informal ways to share their information. Formal ways included scheduled meetings and reports. Informal ways included casual conversations.

The organizational members personalized this knowledge and used it. They created new and unexpected ways to use the partnership insights or they applied it in new situations. Much of this they felt was evidenced in other departments seeking collaborative relationships with providers. One respondent supported this by saying that his organization now realized that they "...cannot be all things to all people." The partners said that they learned about the strengths of the collegiate provider in providing

quality adult education with innovative approaches that advanced corporate learning goals in ways the business partner never anticipated. They learned about the value of planning and evaluation to quality collaboration. As one leader noted, the organization learned how the provider could meet program needs unforeseen at the outset of the partnership:

> Some of the things that we see our college partner being able to help us with as we go into the future with technology is...to do...more with videoconferencing or satellite transmission. ...They have the ability to do it so much better than we ever could.

Consequently, he, like several other respondents, felt that if they had to seek out educational expertise in the future their organizations would happily work with a community college. As one leader commented, "Getting somebody from a college involved...just might spark a few ideas that I haven't thought of myself!" They said that they had begun to appreciate the diversity of knowledge that arises from collaboration and the potential for creating novel learning solutions to corporate needs.

Some were of the opinion that as the partnerships developed the programming evolved. Consequently, the corporations grew to realize that the venture was an integral part of the company. Their partnerships assumed more predominance in the scheme of their organizations' culture. Donald noted that this applied to his program.

> It's an integral part of our business, and it's an integral part of our strategy to grow ...in Canada. ...We, therefore, then have to bring it through the entire organization so that everybody understands that it needs to be supported.

Some leaders, like Donald, stated that they are committed to actively promoting their partnerships throughout their organizations in order to building more understanding about how the program knowledge can be applied to and grow in their milieu. Some respondents also felt that their programs either helped promote their business as a learning organization or fulfilled presidential vision of using education as a key tool to maintain marketplace competitiveness. Therefore, they believed that their programming and the knowledge that they generated as a result of being in the program supported organizational missions and mandates in a much stronger way than they ever thought possible.

Summary

This chapter began with a description of the context of the leaders of four exemplary partnership programs. Western Canadian ACCC colleges working in collaboration with business and industry offered these training and development programs. The programs all had unique characteristics: some were directed at internal employees and some at external groups; others required part-time or full-time attendance; some were self-directed and others were mandatory; some had single site delivery, while others were multi-site; some were provincial and some were inter-provincial; some used primarily class instruction and some were work-site based; and, some were credit offerings leading to a certification, while others were noncredit. There were also differences in the cultures of the participating colleges and companies.

A rich description of the opinions of the nine collaborative leaders on the role that evaluation played in program quality was provided. The major topics reviewed were

grouped in the following categories: (a) leader role and responsibilities, both in-house and to the partnership; (b) identification of specific stakeholder groups and their evaluative needs-internally, externally, and jointly; (c) evaluative activities used in the program, including formal and formal strategies; (d) leadership attributes demonstrated, both technical and personal; (e) barriers they have experienced as they evaluative their programs, in terms of contextual, structural, and procedural factors; and, (f) the wisdom gained by individual leaders and the organization.

Over half of the respondents said that their job titles were the primary connection between the respondents and their respective programs. Those exempted had personal or professional reasons for seeking involvement with their programs. All felt that they were the chief corporate representatives and decision-makers for their programs, although two business-industry leaders sub-divided this role in one partnership.

There was wide consensus from respondents that they were both accountable and participatory leaders. They used their energies and power to access sources of information from a variety of internal and external sources with which to gain an understanding of the progress and quality of the program. Consequently, they felt they both created and needed evaluative knowledge to make decisions they deemed necessary; these decisions influenced the success of the program. All respondents felt that they learned as individuals because of being involved in the partnership. All thought this knowledge spread in their organizations. As a result, most thought that they played a political and educational role in this regard. The majority witnessed their knowledge and the program experiences influence the context, structure, or procedures of their organizations.

The majority commented that a solid working relationship between stakeholders, especially the partners, enhanced all facets of the program, including evaluation and implementation of evaluative recommendations. In particular, several business respondents thought this bond supported problem solving and conflict management, as it related to evaluating program quality.

Most leaders felt that their relationships were progressive and became more integrated over time. Far more college providers than business respondents thought this significant as it did lead to future initiatives or expanded existing program possibilities. For the majority of the business leaders, the program and the quality of student learning was more important than the long-term relationship between the partners. All thought that program quality and maintaining that excellence was very important no matter what the motivation for the partnerships.

Generally speaking, the majority of corporate leaders felt that the more involvement they had in the program, especially evaluation and design, the better the product would be. Some, with clear initial visions of the program, were very assertive in controlling the learning environment to improve transferability of the program knowledge to the work world. Most leaders, both academic and corporate, felt that they needed to educate stakeholders to some degree about the contextual realities and progress of the program and the partnership. For business, these were mostly external stakeholders and for colleges, these were primarily in-house stakeholders, especially management and other faculty.

All respondents identified numerous stakeholders to which they, as a result of their involvement with the program, were accountable. Both the business and the college

leaders felt that they had a continuum of accountability to their various stakeholder audiences. The majority of the leaders included their partners, the students, their administration, their peers, and their instructors as key stakeholder audiences. More corporate leaders placed emphasis on the learners, as stakeholders did, than did the college respondents. The collegiate participants, on the other hand, discussed a far greater range of stakeholders, especially external and other internal audiences. All leaders routinely modified knowledge about the progress and quality of their programs to meet the needs of the specific stakeholder groups.

All leaders identified specific technical or personal attributes that helped them assess the quality and progress of their collaborative programs. More corporate respondents discussed technical skills at greater depth than the education leaders. The main rational for technical attributes from the education side was that it enhanced credibility with the business-industry partners. The main rational from the corporate side was that it gave business the ability to become more involved in program design and evaluation.

The vast majority of the respondents felt that their soft skills were most useful in their leadership role. There was consensus that communication, planning, problem solving, and decision-making skills were highly useful in assessing and maintaining program quality through evaluation. Also educational and business leaders indicated that flexibility, enthusiasm, and willingness to learn were important characteristics. As Lyndon effused,

"It's great working with the students. ...They're all interested, they're all there learning, and it gives you a chance to share what you know with them."

Several educators thought that curiosity and optimism were needed, while several corporate leaders identified the worth of imagination, attentiveness, ethics, respect, and commitment.

All respondents felt strongly that they needed to have a realistic yet manageable perspective of the program's progress and quality primarily for decision-making. Thus, the majority of the respondents discussed formative evaluation at greatest depth. Corporate respondents, especially those in professional or high-risk areas, stressed more summative evaluation more so than did academic leaders. While most respondents used formal strategies for student assessment, they relied heavily on more informal activities for the remainder of their evaluative needs. They favoured qualitative data over quantitative. The exceptions were in situations where safety or professional standards were concerns. In those cases, both college and corporate leaders relied on systematic and more formal and quantitative approaches than did those leaders, whose programs did not carry those liabilities.

All leaders identified themselves as engaging in internal evaluation. The majority of the academic respondents favoured pooling these responsibilities with their partners, as did the business leaders. However, more corporate participants than college maintained majority control of student assessment. Most respondents felt that they had not done a major program evaluation, although several talked about contemplating such an activity for political or promotional reasons. Most respondents felt they did formative not

summative evaluation only. Most considered what they did informal and not formal assessment of program quality and progress.

All respondents talked at considerable length and with enthusiasm about their role in collecting first-hand feedback from stakeholders. There were various reasons given to support this stance, but the two primary motivators talked about were the depth of feedback obtained and the realism of hearing or seeing directly from participants in the phenomenon. Respondents offered a diverse repertoire of qualitative evaluation strategies. Educators and corporate leaders alike recommended observation, as well as, unstructured and semi-structured interviews as very useful ways to gather feedback. More business leaders used ethnographic-type investigative strategies than did the academic respondents. The evaluative worth of spontaneously acquired data and information was emphatically stressed by the majority of those involved.

Educational leaders were much more vocal about utilizing internal organizational resources for gathering data than were corporate participants. The majority of the business and industry leaders interviewed tended to use much more broad-based and purposefully sampled information gathering techniques than did those in the college group. They also used personal technology more than did the collegiate interviewees to collect data and information, as in digital photography or videotape.

All but one of the interviewees recommended face-to-face data collection over other methodologies, especially paper and pencil surveys. Student evaluations, when supported, were much more strongly backed by college respondents, as evidence of program quality than by business. Three corporate and one educational leader defended

the use of the open-response format only. Several respondents commented that these forms were not truly useful except as complaint sheets.

The majority felt that evaluation was a political act, since judging quality or progress is influenced by personal and organizational culture, history, life and work experience, professional codes, or personal and organizational knowledge. Therefore, developing a shared vision of program quality and progress in the context of the partnership was essential in realistically assessing aspects of their program. Just over half of the participants said that the meaning of program quality or progress was evolutionary and situational, as goals and objectives changed over time to suit emerging program visions. They also commented that concepts of evaluation changed as they and their partners began to appreciate their strengths and weaknesses, as well as, their assumptions and needs in evaluation.

All leaders identified contextual barriers, especially cultural and language, to the development of evaluative knowledge. More business than college respondents discussed structural and procedural barriers as significant issues. These were linked to the perceived hierarchical authority framework and complex budget or human resource policies of the traditional college organization. The contextual differences mentioned by several community college members included both internal and external barriers. Two college leaders identified internal structural barriers as major concerns. No corporate leaders referred to significant internal structural or procedural barriers other than the need to craft evaluation that was realistic in light of workload or timeframes. There was also comment from industry on the usefulness and accessibility of pertinent and high quality evaluative instruments.

All respondents felt that they had learned as individuals and as organizations in participating in the partnership program. This enhanced their organization evaluative capacity, as well as, their personal evaluation and leadership skills. There was consensus that the learning about themselves and their partners as organizational entities was very valuable, both in their current and future roles. The cross-fertilization enabled most interviewees to see new ways, in which their organizations had and could interact. Several college and business respondents saw themselves as change agents in their organizations, commenting that either the programs had become a significant facet of their organizational culture or that training and development was emerging as part of the organization's strategic plans. Leader evaluation had also led to policy and procedural changes.

The next chapter compares and contrasts the findings from the community college and corporate respondents and discusses them in term of the literature on collaboration, leadership, organizational knowledge, and evaluation.

Chapter Five: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter explores the similarities and differences among the responses obtained from the community college and corporate respondents. It compares these findings to the discussions of collaboration, leadership, organizational knowledge, and evaluation found in the literature review. The information in this chapter is divided into four main parts: (a) description of the partnerships and their leaders, (b) accountability and leadership, (c) evaluation as knowledge production, and (d) issues concerning evaluation.

Description of the Partnerships and Their Leaders

The nine leaders interviewed represented four award-winning programs, each of which was co-managed by a corporation and a community college in Western Canada. These collaborations united very disparate organizational entities, a finding consistent with contemporary, partnership literature (Bowie, 1994; Campbell, 1997; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Collier, 1996; Cortada, 1998; Gerlach, 1992; Knowles, 1995; Powers, Powers, Betz, & Aslanian, 1988; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Each cohort was unique, but the colleges shared many cultural, historical, and ideological characteristics, as discussed by Cohen & Brawer (1994), Dennison (1995), Dougherty (1994), and Levin (1997). All organizations shared some characteristics of the learning organization pertaining to leadership and knowledge creation, as described by Kanter (1989), Marsick and Watkins(1996), and Senge (1997).

These exemplary programs differed in terms of their learner subscription, delivery modes and sites, instructional strategies, content, and degree of integration. Yet they were alike in that their over-all goal was to offer adults learning experiences, which were applicable to their professional lives. The literature strongly supports the existence and diversity of such specialized educational opportunities (Allen, 1997; ACCC, 1996; Bassi, 1997; Bird & Germain, 1990; Bloom, 1997; Boychuk-Lapp, 1999; College Canada, 1996; Dougherty, 1994; Latrophe, 1999; Palmer, 1992; Powers et al., 1988; Robert, 1997; Senge, 1997; Taylor, 1997).

These projects were positive experiences for participating organizations, and most produced a range of anticipated and unanticipated benefits for the participating organizations and their members. Hanson (1998), Harvey & Dutton (1998), Jackson (1996), Kanter (1989), Peters (1987), and Powers et al. (1988) discuss the unpredictability of outcomes in cooperative ventures as a normal feature of partnership. Each program either continued, leading to further integration between the organizations involved, or, if they had a pre-determined life span, set the stage for the consideration of future initiatives. Consequently, the liaisons were transformative, as well as, progressive in nature. Kanter (1989) and Quinney (personal communication, July 30, 1998) provided a rational for the developmental and transformative nature of these collectives.

Support for collaborative adult education was voiced on mega, macro, and micro levels (Kaufman et al., 1995). College opinion favoured investing in the collaborative relationship for macro and micro reasons, emphasizing the economic for the organization and realistic or modern training for students. Leaders used their affiliation with business-industry to develop additional initiatives, improve organizational profile, or if

appropriate, expand their existing programs. This collegiate responsiveness to the business community was fitting in light of the history of the community college as a regional service-organization, contributing to socio-economic prosperity (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Council for Industry and Higher Education, 1996; Day & Copithorne, 1995; Dennison, 1995; Dougherty, 1994; Greenberg, 1991; Jones, 1997; Melville & Chmura, 1991; Nespoli, 1991; Selman & Dampier, 1991). Various contemporary, contextual factors, especially government policy, heightened this traditional sensitivity (ACCC, 1996; Barnetson, 1999; Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, 1992; Dennison, 1995; Elford, 1996; Henderson, 1995; Jackson, 1996; Knowles, 1995; Sheffield et al., 1982; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Waddell, 1994). As one leader said, "The partnership brings in revenue, which reduces the amount of base dollars coming to us internally...We survive with the help of the revenue generated in the partnership!"

Corporate interests, on the other hand, primarily focussed on all three levels. Most discussion still reflected on micro and macro-levels, thinking of how the immediate and long-term needs of the business organization could be met in each specific program (Gerber, 1995; Kaufman et al., 1995). However, two were adamant that their programming served mega-levels of accountability by addressing broad societal needs, in addition to pressing and explicit mercantile concerns.

Boychuk-Lapp (1999), Dougherty (1994), Jones (1997), Kaufman, Keller & Watkins, 1995; Marsick & Watkins (1996), Rose (1997), Slaughter & Leslie (1996), and Verville (1995) debated these conflicting viewpoints of collaborative adult education. Some authors see this form of education as an experience that is prescriptive and defined. The contradicting perspective views such an opportunity as an event that is more open

and holistic. The contribution to this facet of the literature was predominantly corporate, as Rose (1997) commented: "Is the goal of preparing individuals for work the same as the goal of educating them? ...It has becoming increasingly clear that adult educators have failed to explore the ramifications of this issue. To read current research is to be struck by the absence of debate" (p. 7). The general consensus in the literature was that training and development were synonymous with education. Business saw their collaborative training as more holistic and transformative endeavours than did the academics in print. As Stewart commented, "So, if you look at what's the magic with program, the real magic is the development of competence and self-esteem. It's there!"

These exemplary programs required significant inputs of leader energy and time, over and above other organizational resources. Dr. R.Garrison (personal communication, July 29, 1998), Kanter (1989), and Powers et al. (1988) maintained that the viability and vigour of any partnership rests on the strength of the partnering relationship, as evidenced in these findings. All partners spoke highly of each other as individuals. Most expressed that working with their respective partners was a wonderful experience, both professionally and personally. In several cases this was clearly much more than a casual acquaintance relationship, and several respondents used words like "family" or "friend" to describe their counterparts. The bonds between the leaders and their organizations supported each component of the program. The corporate representatives felt that this particularly facilitated problem solving and decision-making or conflict management, as believed by Campbell (1997), Collier (1996), Davidson & Temple (1997), Kanter (1989), and Powers et al. (1988).

The respondents had considerable expertise, which was acknowledged in their legitimate, leadership status. They applied their expertise to their program experiences, and, as a result, developed new and diverse skills, knowledge, or attitudes that were applicable to their professional lives. As Gordon commented, "The more you do it the more you are developing expertise." Consequently, they were experiential learners in their partnerships, several calling them a form of "professional development". Explorations of organizational learning in change environments and the development of expertise supports this observation (Covey, 1990; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Institute on Public Policy, 1991; Mariotti, 1997; Marsick & Neaman, 1996; Marsick & Watkins, 1996; Nonaka, 1991; Peters, 1987; Pogson, 1995).

The role of collaborative leadership was highly political. The interviewees served an extensive assortment of internal and external stakeholders. Therefore, they were engaged in what several called "an ongoing conversation" with these groups and individuals about the quality and progress of the program. This was in keeping with contemporary organizational theory, which maintained that leadership became more political, as one accepted increased institutional authority and profile (Bensimon, 1994; Birnbaum, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Covey, 1990; Peters, 1989). In fulfilling their political duties, leaders adapted much of their dialogue to meet particular audience needs and interests, using organization, formatting, and delivery strategies to best advantage, just as Grob (1992) and Gallagan (1997) advised.

All leaders identified specific technical or personal attributes that helped them assess or maintain the quality and progress of their collaborative programs. Technical skills were recommended mostly for knowledge management, dissemination, but not for

its creation. While soft skills were used to create the bulk of new knowledge or apply old knowledge in novel ways, which was in keeping with Bassi (1997) and Peters (1987) findings that technical skills are primarily an administrative and communication aide, which can support knowledge building.

More corporate respondents discussed more technical skills at a greater depth than did their academic counterparts. For example, Lyndon described how "Whomever was going out would grab the camera…and make sure they got a couple of shots." Others commented on using specialized software or hardware, such as Gordon, who retraced a typical day's start wherein he would, "…open up my Microsoft Outlook….[and] Explorer and go to the…[corporate] website." There was nothing in the literature to address this preference, but I suspect that this may be linked to the more advanced and accessible technological resources or flattened organizational structures of the corporate respondents. In contemporary businesses and industries, many traditional, many staff simply were eliminated with downsizing or right-sizing policies (Harris, 1996). Consequently, remaining personnel needed to develop independent skill sets to do the work they were accountable for (Klatt et al., 1998; Peters, 1987; Mariotti, 1997).

In contrast, academic respondents discussed healthy, collegiate hierarchies of knowledge-management and authority. They networked with other in-house experts, using various departments or skilled support staff to support their work. This extended externally in one case, where a corporate partner having technical expertise with and access to advanced technology, controlled those aspects of the partnership. Also collegiate respondents were quite frank about the limited funding available, which may be a factor in accessing new technologies or being trained to use existing equipment. The

traditional culture of the college, as a highly structured and interconnected community, may also encourage such knowledge bartering. As Arden reflected, "We need clerical support and budget tracking, enrolment tracking - all the systems that help us maintain control of any program that we run here at the College." The collegiate leaders, therefore, had standardized and entrenched systems to work within. As successful college employees, they would have been inculcated into these procedural norms.

The professionally oriented technical knowledge and skills were the exception to this observation. Technical skill and knowledge sets, which pertained directly to the bottom line of the business-industry partners, were valued very highly by half the collegiate respondents, as they believed that these attributes enhanced their standing with corporate associates. The majority of the business leaders prized their professional-technical characteristics because these gave them the ability to influence program curriculum and evaluation. I believe that these findings speak to the issues of knowledge, as power in organizational life.

Davenport & Prusak (1998), Kanter, (1989), Marsick & Neaman (1996), Nonaka (1991), Pogson (1995), Peters (1987), and Senge (1997) testify to the value of knowledge, as an asset, for both the individual and the organization. As Peters (1987) surmises, "Knowledge is power - it always has been; it always will be" (p. 505). The affect, which this power has on the nature of equity in collaborative programming, especially as it applies to evaluation and judgements of quality, is worthy of further comment. I will deal with the ramifications of this in the *Recommendations for Further Study* section of Chapter 6.

Communication, problem solving and decision-making skills were highly useful in all facets of leaders' practice and learning. Birnbaum (1992), Jones (1997), Klatt et al. (1998), Knowles (1995), Marsick & Neaman (1996), and Tumblin (1997) attested to the value of these skills in organizational life. College leaders actively adopted the communication styles and vocabulary of their business partners. Training and development literature supported this approach, as a way to build clarity and consensus for cooperative evaluation and decision-making (Palmer, 1992; Robert, 1997). The Institute for Research on Public Policy's (1991) listing reviewed the remainder of the non-technical skills revealed, under the heading adaptability.

Two corporate leaders were very vocal in the belief that collaborative leadership rested on a separate attribute, ethics, as did Byrd (1996), Price (1987) and Covey (1990). They felt that moral values influenced programs' ongoing development and certainly played a strong role in any evaluation. Stewart MacKenzie felt that he began "...leading with my values, my principles, and the company's guiding principles. That's what I used." They commented on the need to trust and openly communicate concepts of quality and success with their partners. This was seen as essential for building a clear understanding of the assumptions and purposes behind evaluation. The need to protect student confidentiality in evaluation was also mentioned. This was supported by Byrd (1996), who maintained that "We must treat our partners and each other with absolute integrity... [to]maintain the trust that is needed when sharing knowledge and information. [It] is considered in virtually every business decision made" (p. 480).

The interviewees were all participatory leaders, who showed high levels of initiative in assessing and creating knowledge about various facets of the initiative.

Christopher Casel said, ""I'd like to think that if I'm doing my job effectively, I'm probably at my desk maybe one day a week." Bensimon (1994), Birnbaum (1992), Cohen & Brawer (1994), Covey (1990), Fritz (1991), Harris (1996), Harwood (1991), Kanter (1989), Klatt et al. (1998), Nonaka (1991), Peters (1987), Stebbins (1987), and Staniforth (1997), argued that participatory leadership, such as this, was a vital component of contemporary management, evaluation, organizational knowledge creation, and decision-making. Kanter states that, " The formation of partnership almost by definition calls for participative skills - gathering information, resisting preconceived ideas, listening to others, testing assumptions, seeking consensus" (p. 154).

Accountability and Leadership

As discussed previously, the respondents had assigned job titles in their organizations. This gave them a legitimate power base in the authority structure of their institutions. Consequently, each leader had unique privileges and responsibilities, as noted by Cohen & Brawer (1994) and Stebbins (1987). In about half the cases, this power was person-centered, as individual authority rested on the respondent's expertise in a specific professional area. As one leader commented, "I know more about the program [content] than anyone else at the College". Kanter (1989) identified such arrangements as characteristic of post-entrepreneurial or learning organizations, where collaboration and knowledge creation were valued attributes.

Both the business and the college leaders recognized a continuum of accountability to their stakeholders. Corporate leadership placed far more emphasis on very selective internal and external stakeholders, than did the college respondents, who

emphasized a more diverse mix of audiences. As a collegiate leader explained, "I work with a community college and these people are a big part of the business community. So, they have a say...even though they are not the people who signed the contract." More business leaders talked with more intensity and depth about students as key stakeholders, than did collegiate respondents. The collegiate respondents focussed more on their partners and faculty peers, as well as, a host of other primary and secondary audiences. While this finding was unanticipated, I think it echoes back to the literature on the community college as an organization.

The college was a unique entity. Its members demonstrated more loyalty to the democratic ethic embodied in the mission of their organization, than they did to any allegiance to their content discipline (Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Dennison, 1995; Dougherty, 1994). I contend this commitment lead to an active interest in the feelings and perceptions of all stakeholders, especially those with whom intimate contact, as in the class setting, was not a given. The time and energy spent by some academic leaders in living up to this philosophy was extensive.

Also, I believe administrative interest in collaboration and its popularity in the collegiate milieu made it a central topic on campus (Knowles, 1995; Marsick & Neaman, 1996; Waddell, 1994). For example, one academic leader described himself as an organizational model, who with administration encouragement, acted as an internal change agent by spreading knowledge on his collaboration internally. This was a stance recommended by Marsick & Watkins (1996), who argued that to be a learning organization one must have "...leaders who model and support learning at the individual,

team, and organizational levels" (p. 18). I think these leaders focussed attention on internal stakeholders, as explicitly or implicitly directed by administration. Friere (1974), Marsick & Neaman (1996), and Mezirow (1991) spoke to this ability of organizational authority and cultural norms to subtly or overtly shape thinking.

In addition, it was also clear that some college leaders looked at long-term relationships with their corporate clients. They were also frank in several instances about the financial pressures that made their programs so vital to their departments, divisions, or colleges. An academic leader testified that, "We survive with the help of the revenue generated in the partnership!" The subsequent attention paid to corporate partners may in part reflect their desire to ensure the ongoing satisfaction of the business, thereby, enhancing the likelihood of future liaisons. Another added, "We certainly want the learners to be happy and satisfied too and we endeavour to make sure that happens, but ultimately it's the guy who's paying the bills who's calling the shots." Barnetson (1999), Dennison (1995), Dougherty (1994), Elford (1996), Knowles (1995), Sheffield et al. (1982), Slaughter & Leslie (1997), and Waddell (1994) review the fiscal and other contextual pressures that promote collegiate attentiveness to business.

Evaluation as Knowledge Creation

One of the ways that each leader addressed his or her information needs in accountability was to formally and informally evaluate the programming. Although most considered themselves mainly informal evaluators, many did in fact employ systematic and standardized methodologies as part of their assessment, especially in regards to judging program products or student performance (Ewell, 1994; Folinsbee & Jurmo,

1994; Gardner, 1994; Jacobi et al., 1994). The respondents noted many formal evaluative techniques or instruments that helped in this regard. Some examples included: specialized data collection templates for their programs, scheduled progress-update meetings, institutional reporting protocols for annual reports or quarterly budget variances, portfolios, exams, inspections, performance appraisals, instructor evaluation procedures and policies, independent and mandated audits, and standardized documentation of students.

All of the formal evaluation completed by the leaders paralleled either the Kirkpatrick, Professional Expert Review, Objectives-based, or Case Study approaches. There was, however, no one method, selected and applied as presented in the literature. Instead, the leaders created idiosyncratic blends that used elements of these methodologies (Caffarella, 1994).

Kirkpatrick level 1 and 2-type assessment was done in all programs sampled, as student evaluations were completed by all participants. In addition, most courses used some form of formal examination, pre-assessment and post-assessment, performance evaluation, or product inspection. Several program leaders also employed techniques complementary to an objectives-based review at least formatively, and two employed it summatively, as in Nicola's case where the business experts "...look at what we have done and measure and report that its fine, good enough to go the next step." In the latter case, the respective academic and corporate respondents met to formally review their performance outcomes against the program's objectives, as captured in written or oral agreements. As well, there was widespread reliance on expert opinion, as in the Professional or Expert Review approach. This finding was not consistent with the level of usage indicated in the

literature. I think, however, that its application in these programs was logical, when balanced against the professional accreditation processes attached to over half of these collaborative programs (Caffarella, 1994). This approach was also supported by the legislative demands associated with worker health and safety rules and regulations (Bird & Germain, 1990; Taylor, 1997). And finally, there were aspects of case study evaluation applied in all programs, as leaders consistently collected rich description about the program or facets of the program from the participants themselves, especially the students and other key stakeholders.

On the whole, strategies that gave qualitative data were preferred by the leaders. Most felt they provided richer and more useful information than quantitative strategies did. Respondents endorsed the corporate literature that supported the use of first-hand testimony, as the best source of information available for higher level decision-making (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Peters, 1987). All interviewees used a variety of naturalistic strategies, especially observation and interview methodologies.

Unobtrusive, face-to-face and one-on-one data collection was used over more interventionist approaches. Ewell (1994), Gall, Borg & Gall (1996), and Lincoln & Guba (1989) support the use of unobtrusive strategies in qualitative investigation. The one exception to this were student evaluations, which were valued primarily for their written comments. The Colleges involved had a traditional practice of using such pencil and paper surveys, which may explain their usage despite their low credibility with some respondents. Also predominantly, but not exclusively, corporate leaders employed purposeful sampling to gather information.

But despite the use of systematic and formal approaches, the leaders relied heavily on informal and unplanned evaluative activities to create knowledge. It was considered an unobtrusive collection methodology was favored over more invasive means, as it was felt to be most realistic. Leaders took advantage of any type of informal opportunity to monitor the program and gather feedback. They learned from their observations and used those insights to address identified problems, as well as, work on continuous program improvement by ameliorating potential concerns, responding to emergent needs, and taking advantage of revealed opportunities for expansion. Understanding, rather than spotting and fixing problems, was the general goal.

For example, a pivotal quality indicator for most corporate and half the academic leaders was the transfer of learning from the classroom to the job-site. Respondents echoed the general sentiments of Gerber (1995): "...If they don't apply any of it when they return to the job, the course has wasted everyone's time" (p. 28). Evaluation of transference was informal in all partnerships at the time of the study, although one partnership was actively moving towards formal assessment measures. One partnership felt such assessment was largely irrelevant, as the holistic advantages of education for the individual could not help but transfer into the workplace.

Those concerned felt strongly that formal evaluation of transferability was either unnecessary or could not better the informal tactics used. Some respondents simply felt that their ability to casually assess the degree of transference was superior to that available via current, formalized measures. These opinions contradicted training and development literature. Kirkpatrick (1995) and Kaufman, Keller, & Watkins (1995) strongly recommended the systematic assessment of transferability in work-oriented

programming, as a support for summative decision-making and for continuous program improvement. They also refuted the majority of evaluative literature, which supports formalized assessment (AEA, 1994; Chen, 1996; Gardiner, 1994; House, 1994; Worthen & Sanders, 1994).

In addition, the findings also intersected Gerber's axiom that assessment of transfer was primarily for "...reserved for large, high profile initiatives or ones in which the stakeholders demand evidence of results" (p. 31). Since these leaders cared deeply about evidence of results, felt that these programs were extremely important, large, and high profile initiatives, there is evidence that their informal assessment of transference was worthwhile for them. They did use their findings on an ongoing basis to improve program quality. In this, the leaders showed that they trusted and relied on their intuitive ability to create sense from their own and the perceptions of others. While informal approaches are not seen in the literature, as being as reliable as formal techniques, they gave these leaders useful information and data.

In taking this approach, the respondents undoubtedly sacrificed some accuracy for what Karl Weick (1995) called enhanced "...plausibility, pragmatics, coherence, reasonableness, creation, invention, and instrumentality" (p. 57). This exchange has all the attributes of what organizational literature referred to effective practice in a learning organization (Covey, 1990; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Institute on Public Policy, 1991; Kanter, 1989; Mariotti, 1997; Marsick & Neaman, 1996; Marsick & Watkins, 1996; Nonaka, 1991; Peters, 1987). As Marsick & Neaman (1996) pointed out, these leaders were evaluatively learning in this sensemaking process by responding to cues or triggers and:

> ...Filtering...information through...selective perception, values, beliefs, and framing of the situation, ...review[ing]...results, ...digging for the real reasons behind both intended and unintended consequences [and], ...selectively mak[ing] meaning of the experience (p. 100).

By using informal approaches, the leaders maximized the learning they did via sensemaking, thereby improving their responsiveness or ability to act and implement needed measures. This approach was so natural to most leaders that they saw it as part of themselves, as one respondent said it was his " ...intuitive sense that I think should be trusted."

There is a gap in the literature regarding the role of sensemaking in informal evaluation. Leaders must make sense of what they perceive through informal evaluation. Understanding how they do this is of importance for the future evaluative practice in academic-corporate partnership. Evaluation literature already points to the growth of internal assessment and a dearth of follow-through on many structured evaluations (Ewell, 1994; House, 1994). Informal assessment, as evidenced in these findings, is a useful and vital form of evaluation. Recommendations were applied here more frequently than not and on an ongoing basis. Leaders felt that they trusted this form of evaluation, as they relied on their ability to make sense of complex situations using these informal assessment strategies. These collaborative leaders modeled the action-oriented thinking of contemporary leadership theory (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Kanter, 1989; Marsick & Watkins, 1996; Senge, 1997). Informal evaluation fitted their management needs because they, as Karl Weick (1995) explained:

> ...Want to get into action, ...simplify rather than elaborate. [They feel]...bold action is adaptive because its opposite, deliberation, is futile in a changing world (p. 60).

Additional comment is made in the *Recommendations* section of Chapter 6.

The business leaders interpreted many quality indicators from a cognitivistic rather than a behaviourist perspective. This slant paralleled training and development literature, and contrasted sharply with contemporary adult education theory. Prevailing adult learning theory viewed corporate education as being more behaviourist and directive in orientation, whereas contemporary human resource development literature took a more cognitivistic and individualistic stance on corporate training experiences (Boychuk-Lapp, 1999; Gerber, 1995; Kim, 1993; Merriam & Caffarella, 1993; Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Therefore, a shared understanding of transference would have to be built to unite academic and corporate viewpoints. Gerber (1995) reflected that finding this was "...an arduous process in some cases" (p. 31). The literature supported this need for joint understanding, especially regarding evaluation and partnership (Chen, 1994; Folinsbee & Jurmo, 1994; Gardner, 1994; Guba, 1989; House, 1994; Kanter, 1989; Lincoln & Love, 1993; Madaus et al., 1994; Powers et al., 1988). Ramifications of this finding for the research of postsecondary-private sector collaboration and evaluation will be reviewed in the *Recommendations* section of Chapter 6.

This knowledge was shared with stakeholders, as needs and opportunities dictated. Their positions gave them unique access to forums for this sharing. As Marsick and Neaman (1995) noted the, "...fruits of learning are typically valued more when they come from those who have more status, power, or influence" (p. 102).

The industry and business leaders helped shape evaluative understandings, benchmarks, or evaluative strategies. Two corporate leaders established student performance outcomes independent of their academic partners. Kanter (1989), Gerber (1995), Kaufman, Keller, & Watkins (1995), Love (1993), Madaus et al.(1994), and Powers et al. (1988) stressed the importance of both partners' involvement in creating evaluative expectations and norms. This built trust and understanding, plus reduced the potential for future disagreement. The collegiate comfort with this level of corporate control was unusual in light of the literature, but may be traced to the type of programming involved.

Educational programs, which have an inherently high degree of associated risk, increase collaborators' potential liability for student safety or progress. The liability-risk relationship was fully explained in Bird & Germain's (1990) discussion of loss management theory, where leadership clearly has legal and public accountability for the welfare of those working in their organizational domain. Two exemplary programs had characteristics, which would increase student risk above that normally seen in a traditional, classroom setting. I think that the academic leadership of these programs relinquished some of their power to the corporate partners because they realized that these leaders had special expertise, which if integrated fully into the curriculum, benchmarks, or evaluative strategies, could reduce risk to program students. This in turn protected the colleges' interests. This unanticipated finding has repercussions for evaluation in collaborative programs, as knowledge about liability and risk reduction would conceivably influence the evaluative strategies employed, as well as, the overall

power balance in the evaluation and the partnership. I will comment further in the *Recommendations* section of Chapter 6.

All respondents felt that they had learned as individuals and as organizations in participating in the partnership program. There was consensus that learning about their own and their partners' organizations was very valuable, both in the respondents' current and future work. The cross-fertilization of knowledge that occurred enabled most interviewees to see new ways in which their organizations could interact. In this, several college and business respondents saw themselves as change agents in their organizations, commenting that because of their experiences and knowledge the programs had become a significant facet of their current organizational life or that collaboration in training and development was emerging as part of their organizations' long term strategic vision. Consequently the majority witnessed their knowledge influence the context, structure, or procedures of their organizations. One leader testified that a college-wide alcohol and drug policy, "...started in our partnership." The learning organization literature developed by Bassi (1997), Brookfield (1986), Gallagan (1997), Kim (1993), Marsick & Neaman (1996), Nonaka (1991), Senge (1997), and Watkins & Marsick (1996) supported this observation.

Issues Concerning Evaluation

All respondents felt strongly that they needed to have a realistic yet manageable perspective of the program's progress and quality to make decisions to solve identified problems or continuously improve their programs. Consequently, there was more far support for formative versus summative evaluation. As Christopher commented that

from his viewpoint, assessment "...is kind of like a [daily]progress report. ....It's an ongoing evaluation and adjustment process." Alternatively, summative evaluations were perceived as formal events that required extraordinary resources or planning. They were, therefore, reserved primarily for promotion or student assessment. For example, one leader recalled that the business leader was "... planning to do...that [summative] evaluation. ...They [are] interested in publicizing this to other corporations, so that they can learn from the lessons that we have learned here in this partnership" as a promotional activity.

The exceptions to this were those situations where safety or professional accreditation standards were major program issues. In those cases, both college and corporate program leaders relied on more summative and quantitative approaches than did those leaders, whose programs did not carry these liabilities. I think this shift reflected the individuals' and the organizations' burden of proof should failure to look out for students' interests be suspected, as discussed previously in leadership accountability. As one leader commented, "If something goes wrong, someone is going to come and look for the paperwork. They'll say, 'Demonstrate to me that you've done...everything you could possibly do to try and minimalize the risk.' " Also, several respondents used their formative evaluation summatively, as Chen (1996) described. They evaluated to inform summative decision-making by judging and modifying sub-components of the whole program before proceeding to the next phase of the initiative.

The majority of the leaders identified themselves as internal evaluators in that they performed or supervised evaluative duties, as part of their leadership role. This reflected the viewpoint of evaluation literature that notes a move towards decentralized,

non-professional, and internal evaluation (Gardner, 1994; Love, 1993; Madaus et al., 1994; Stufflebeam, 1983). However, one partnership used independent auditors to render a professional judgement. Over half the leaders were also certified experts in the content area of the programming, and all programs had highly qualified instructional staff, many considered experts in their fields. These individuals were able to render professional opinions on the quality of work performed by students.

Most respondents indicated that they felt evaluation was political, since judging program quality or progress was influenced by both personal and organizational culture, history, life and work experience, professional codes, or personal and organizational knowledge. These individuals argued strongly that developing a shared vision of what program quality and progress means in the context of the partnership was essential before assessing any aspects of their program. As Arden stated, "We work together to look at the feedback and judge the quality of what we're doing. When we make changes...we do it together."

Just over half of the participants said that their program visions evolved over time, as did concepts of what each partner meant by partnership quality or progress gained clarity as partners worked together and jointly shaped constructs. However, as in Harvey and Green (1993) and Weston (1994) noted, there were various interpretations of the word quality with some respondents using it in multiple ways dependent on which stakeholder group or facet of programming they were referring to. The literature did point to the relativity of the concept of quality, but I had no idea that it could vary so widely in terms of which particular facet of the program was being discussed.

For example, the vast majority of the academic and corporate respondents saw quality as transformative, especially regarding enhancement of student behaviour, skills, and attitudes. Most respondents demonstrated a sincere belief that their programming helped the learners change in a positive way. The attention paid to qualitative feedback from the students was strong evidence of the student-centered focus that these leaders had. Some of the programs with voluntary admission also used a conceptualization of quality as empowerment. Two corporate leaders, in particular, saw their programming as increasing participants' self-esteem, confidence, and awareness. They wanted their employees to be ongoing, self-directed and self-critical learners. Stewart, for example, saw program quality reflected in the subsequent academic success of his students. Consequently, these leaders deliberately made learning to learn and problem-solving significant themes in their programs for this reason.

With reference to accountability, the main conceptualization of quality was that of value for money, wherein cost-benefit analysis or key performance indicators were considered important indicators of the worth of the program. For example, Donald Jarrett explained that technology access and costs play a factor in collaborative programming assessment "...because the capital costs...is very, very high and yet the colleges have these facilities." In terms of accreditation or production, fitness for purpose was the typical interpretation employed. For example, one leader expressed a judgement of program quality based on the number of students, who had passed the accreditation exam. Another partnership, saw quality as having a product meet corporate specifications via expert inspections.

Several leaders used traditional conceptualizations of quality. They described that what they found in their partnership as something "special" or extraordinary in training and development. In reflecting on the entire program experience, some leaders found it difficult to detail what exactly made their programs exemplary, except to say that they just knew they had a program, which was remarkable. As Christopher stated, "I think this was special and I'd like to think that we rose to the challenge, where others probably couldn't." Other commentary, focussed on the efforts made to put only the best or "state of the art" into the program. The resulting input of superior resources and processes, made the end result exemplary. Naturally, all leaders mentioned the awards received by their partnership programs, but interestingly not one felt that these awards were for the main evidence of their programs' quality. For this, the majority relied on positive qualitative feedback from stakeholders.

Most expressed no concerns for individual bias either in data collection or interpretation, whether formal or informal. This contradicted the literature, which argued that naturalistic evaluation is fraught with the potential for researcher bias (Cook & Campbell, 1979; Gardiner, 1994; Gardner, 1994; Guba, 1989; House, 1994; Love, 1993; Madaus et al., 1994). Two respondents, however, supported the limited use of external auditors in summative evaluation to enhance trustworthiness. Organizational motivations for programming varied, and included economic, political, logistical, and societal reasons for collaboration. There was evidence that fiscal motivators were more prevalent in the collegiate group, yet this did not bias data collection. As one respondent testified, "Even if it's something negative, I want [my partners]...to call me and [say] 'Let's sit down and talk about this'." Correspondingly, corporate leaders welcomed all forms of comment.

The cultures of the respondents and their organizations influenced evaluative knowledge production in and as resulting from the programming experiences. Both adult learning and human resource development theorists contend that this was a reasonable discovery (Brookfield, 1986; Friere, 1974; Marsick & Neaman, 1996; Mezirow, 1991; Senge, 1997). As Marsick and Neaman explained "In organizations, individuals try to make sense of the experiences they have in pursuit of their work...They either uncritically use socialized, collective meanings from the organization to shape their thinking, or else -ideally- they can challenge these socialized views and proactively shape new norms through their interactions with others" (p. 99). Even the earliest sensemaking theorists, such as Carl Rogers (1967), also contended that social influences would shape or colour assumptions, attention, questions asked, and interpretations made. The respondents confirmed Weick's (1995) philosophy that much of their efforts were "...about accounts that are socially acceptable and credible [because]...in an equivocal, postmodern world, infused with the politics of interpretation, ...conflicting interests, ...multiple shifting identities, [this]...seems fruitless, and not of much practical help, either" (p. 61).

Cultural barriers to knowledge generation were a significant stumbling block for the vast majority of the partners. Most collegiate and corporate leaders devoted more time, energy, and consideration in handling academic obstacles, than they gave to corporate concerns. Although the literature does address most of the problems noted, it does not deal with the difficulty academic collaborators had in communicating with other college members (Campbell, 1997; Powers et al., 1988; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997).

I did not anticipate that language style and vocabulary being an internal issue for some collegiate participants. I feel that this barrier was linked to the collegiate subcultures to which these leaders belonged. As Levin (1997) and Stebbins (1987) anticipated, these subcultures were united by their unique professional expertise, interests, language styles, and vocabulary. In these features the collegiate subcultures were more complementary to those of their business-industry partners than they were to those of their colleges. I contend that they were caught in a dilemma similar to that which Gallagan (1997) identified, in which they had to seek ways of promoting understanding or their information was "...useless [because they could not]...present it to others clearly" (p. 24). I do not think divided loyalties was an issue in these conflicts, as the academic leaders concerned adhered to Dennison's (1995) commitment profile. The *Recommendations* section of Chapter 6 contains further comment.

Chapter Six: Conclusions, Recommendations, and Reflections

Introduction

This closing chapter provides information on: (a) research context of the study, (b) purpose of the study, (c) method, (d) responses to research questions, (e) conclusions, (f) recommendations, and (g) personal reflections.

Research Context of the Study

Some literature suggested that because the identity of community colleges is inexorably bound to the interests of regional business and industry, they have a unique status in postsecondary education (e.g., Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Dennison, 1995; Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Dougherty, 1994). They are perceived the most credible source of postsecondary training and development programming (ACCC, 1996; Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Dougherty, 1994; Knowles, 1994). The college, as an organizational entity, is under tremendous socioeconomic, political, and technological pressures, including rising expectations of accountability (Barnetson, 1999; Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, 1992; Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Council for Industry and Higher Education, 1996; Dennison, 1995; Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Dougherty, 1994; Elford, 1996; Sheffield et al., 1982). Entrepreneurialism, in the form of partnership with private sector companies, has become a panacea for many of these contextual ills (Knowles, 1995). The literature argues that ideally partnership does indeed offer highly desirable and tangible socioeconomic or political benefits to participants, as well as,

provide unique opportunities for learning, which contribute to organizational viability and vibrancy (e.g., Allen, 1997; ACCC, 1996; Bassi, 1997; Bird & Germain, 1990; Bloom, 1997; Boychuk-Lapp, 1999; College Canada, 1996; Collier, 1996; Dougherty, 1994; Gerlach, 1992; Kanter, 1989; Latrophe, 1999; Palmer, 1992; Peters, 1987; Powers et al., 1988; Robert, 1997; Taylor, 1997). Some literature also speaks to the inherent difficulties in collaboration (e.g., Cole, 1998; Dougherty, 1994; Rose, 1997; Powers at al., 1988; Slaughter & Leslie, 1996; Verville, 1995).

Garrison (Personal communication, July 23, 1998), Kanter (1989), Powers et al. (1988), and Hanson (1998) proposed that the relationship between partnership leaders is critical to the success of any partnership, as it underscores all facets of the collaboration. Bensimon (1994), Covey (1990), Davenport & Prusak (1998), Institute on Public Policy (1991), Kanter (1989), Mariotti (1997), Marsick & Neaman (1996), Marsick & Watkins (1996), Nonaka (1991), Peters (1987), and Watkins & Marsick (1993) argued that this contemporary leadership role is both participative and political. Leaders are accountable as knowledge-creators, models, and facilitators. They empower others to engage in an ongoing dialogue that builds organizational knowledge and enhances continual improvement. They have acknowledged expertise as evidenced in their status within their organizations, and they work to increase and apply their explicit and tactic knowledge (Bensimon, 1994; Nonaka, 1991; Mariotti, 1997; Pogson, 1996).

Leaders are accountable to a diverse array of stakeholders, who receive and share knowledge about program quality and progress. To fulfil their responsibilities and enhance answerability, leaders evaluate, both formally and informally, to make sense of projects in their domain and produce insights for formative and summative purposes.

Internal evaluation, as a subset of the accountability movement, is increasingly popular (House, 1994; Klatt et al., 1998; Love, 1993; Masten, 1995). This form of inquiry requires specific knowledge and skills (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; Lincoln & Guba, 1994). Two key uses of evaluative knowledge are for decision-making and continuous improvement of the programming (AEA, 1994; Bloom, 1997; Chen, 1996; Ewell, 1994; Folinsbee & Jurmo, 1994; Gardiner, 1994; Gerber, 1995; Kaufman et al., 1995; Kirkpatrick (as cited in Gerber, 1995); Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1994; Worthen & Sanders, 1994). Collaborative leaders are expected to do all. The link between the roles of the leader, as internal evaluator, informal sense-maker, and accountable knowledge-builder, is not explored in the literature.

Purpose of the Study

Leadership knowledge on evaluation, as it builds understanding of the quality and progress of collaborative programming between community colleges and the private sector, is pertinent to contemporary adult education practice. The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the perceptions of the leaders of exemplary corporate-community college partnerships, as knowledge creators, on the relationship between evaluation and program quality and progress. This primary question was underpinned by five subquestions: (a) How did leaders perceive their role in the overall program accountability and evaluation process? (b) How did leaders feel evaluation affected the quality of their programming? (c) Who did leaders feel were the key audiences for their evaluative knowledge? (d) What lessons did leaders feel they, as individuals, had learned

regarding collaborative evaluation? (e) What strategies did leaders feel helped them evaluate the progress and quality of their venture and why?

Method

This exploratory study used a qualitative approach to gather a body of knowledge about the phenomenon of partnership programming and evaluation from the perspective of two different groups, the corporate or community college leaders, involved in that phenomenon. The investigation used a purposeful sample of nine corporate and community college leaders, representing four exemplary community college and business-industry partnership programs. The postsecondary institutions were chosen because of their status, as members of the ACCC in Western Canada and providers of exemplary collaborative programming excellence. The community colleges referred me to their corporate partners. Selection of the leaders was dependent on two factors. One was the organizational nomination that recognized their expertise on and status in the partnership. The second was the individuals' willingness to participant.

The semi-structured interview methodology used was consistent with the tenets naturalistic inquiry and the purpose of the study. Planning and implementation of all phases of the study, including data collection and analysis, followed the recommendations of the literature, including Chadwick, Bahr, and Albrecht (1984), Fowler (1993), Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996), Guba (1981), and Lincoln and Guba (1989, 1994). Trustworthiness was enhanced with attention to study truth-value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality (Lincoln & Guba, 1989).

Responses to Research Questions

One main research question and five subquestions directed this exploratory study. The following section speaks to the subquestions and then the main inquiry.

Subquestion One: How did leaders perceive their role in the overall program accountability and evaluation process?

The findings from the responses of the academic and corporate leaders showed that these individuals perceived themselves having a key role in the program accountability and evaluation process. They appreciated that they were legitimate leaders in their organizations, and as such, were responsible for a specific domain of organizational life, which included their exemplary collaborative partnerships. They also knew that they had the confidence of their senior management and other key stakeholders, in representing their organizations at the partnership table. They recognized that they had specific skills and knowledge as part of their leadership expertise, that they could use to build a grounded understanding of what was going on in any given facet of the program on an ongoing basis or comprehend the nature of the venture in its entirety.

The leaders acknowledged that they had both the power and the responsibility to seek data, information, and knowledge from others. They also knew that they were a primary source of knowledge about the quality and progress of the program back to their own institutions. They adopted an adaptive view of leadership, complementary to that seen in a learning organization, by empowering others, searching for good questions rather than answers, looking at the how the parts of the program can connect and reconnect to shape a dynamic whole, seeking effectiveness over efficiency, and anticipating trends or factors that may influence program quality (Covey, 1990;

Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Institute on Public Policy, 1991; Kanter, 1989; Mariotti, 1997; Marsick & Neaman, 1996; Marsick & Watkins, 1996; Nonaka, 1991; Peters, 1987).

The majority also used informal evaluation and sensemaking as part of their evaluative thinking by looking for interruptions in normal flow of programming events, following up on subtle cues, interpreting or making retrospective sense of their findings, using analogies and metaphors to shape understandings, balancing plausibility against accuracy, and engaging in casual interactions that produced or refined knowledge (Rogers, 1967; Weick, 1995).

The respondents adhered to the principles of participatory leadership, in that they were deeply involved in the partnership and showed a great deal of initiative in continuously assessing program status and creating knowledge about the initiative (Cohen & Brawer, 1994; Covey, 1990; Fritz, 1991; Harris, 1996; Harwood, 1991; Kanter, 1989; Klatt et al., 1998; Nonaka, 1991; Peters, 1987; Stebbins, 1987; Staniforth, 1997). They realized that they had the responsibility, power, and authority to act on their insights in order to safeguard the program and its stakeholders, as appropriate. These actions included formative, as well as, summative decision making and problem solving.

As effective political leaders, the leaders appreciated that they should develop quality relationships, within and outside of their organizations, for two reasons. One was to promote the smooth and ongoing transfer of evaluative data, information, and knowledge for continual program improvement. The second was to enhance understanding of evaluative knowledge and leaders' actions resulting from evaluation. In particular, the leaders emphasized their role in building strong relationships with their

immediate corporate or academic partners. This intimate and long-term contact created trust, which leaders felt supported shared understandings for evaluation and follow-though.

The leaders also had supervisory duties that required them to monitor or direct the behaviour of particular stakeholders, especially program staff or students. The collegiate respondents also had indirect supervisory duties related to their delegation of specific data and information collection responsibilities to internal, technical experts. This data and information was needed by the leaders to gain a deep understanding of program quality and progress. As such, they had to ensure that the material was collected in a format, appropriate to their needs, and delivered to them in a timely fashion. Several of the corporate stakeholders had extensive external stakeholders to whom they had sole accountability; many of these were mandated.

The leaders acknowledged that they had a key role in planning and supervising budgets, crafting business plans or contracts, implementing organizational policies and procedures. These influenced the frequency and scope of evaluation. Budgets determined the resources, available for data collection and analysis. Policies and procedures influenced the delegation of evaluative duties and the timeframes for assessment, as well as, distribution of evaluative knowledge. Contracts, oral agreements, or business plans spoke to many diverse aspects of the program, including evaluation.

Subquestion Two: How did leaders feel evaluation affected the quality of their programming?

The leaders were unanimous that their ability to assess the status, quality, and progress of their programs contributed positively to program quality. They saw their informal assessment, in particular, as very valuable in maintaining ongoing program quality. They used their insights to modify programming in order to respond to contextual changes and address issues identified through independent sensemaking or via comments from others. In the latter, the respondents felt that their ability to react to informal stakeholder opinions was critical in promoting continual improvement to meet emerging membership needs.

Formal assessment helped structure data collection, particularly as it pertained to networking with internal technical experts, such as computer service departments, or data collection system centers, such as registration services. These data gave leaders a foundation of empirical statistics, which they could then manipulate into information, which was fodder for knowledge creation. Formal evaluation also provided solid evidence for accreditation and professional certification purposes.

In addition, the scope of informal and formal evaluation, in concert with the high participation by leadership, helped promote a culture of quality and learning in these programming areas. This transferred into all facets of the programming, including interactions with students, partnership team members, and other stakeholders.

Continual informal and formal evaluation honed the skills of the leaders involved. It added to their personal leadership expertise and enhanced the evaluative capacity of their organizations. These translated into more shared understandings between the

leaders and other stakeholders, as well as, further knowledge creation, which had positive ripple effects in their respective exemplary programs and organizations.

Subquestion Three: Who did leaders feel were the key audiences for their evaluative knowledge?

The respondents also saw themselves as facilitators of an ongoing dialogue about their programs within certain individuals or groups. The leaders felt that they were accountable to a wide variety of primary and secondary stakeholders. Leaders identified specific individuals expected to receive leaders' feedback, and in many cases, were given opportunities to share their own perceptions on the program.

These audiences included in-house groups, such as students, unions, teachers, senior management, support staff, and the project team members, including the leaders themselves. They also included external stakeholders, with which one leader acted as liaison, such as professional associations, committees, or think tanks. The final major audience for the leaders were external groups accessible to both leaders, such as prospective partners, media, government agencies, departments, or advisory groups. Collegiate respondents attended to a more diverse set of internal and external stakeholders than did corporate leaders, who emphasized the learners as key audiences.

Subquestion Four: What lessons did leaders feel they, as individuals, had learned regarding collaborative evaluation?

The leaders presented many lessons for consideration because of their participation in these exemplary programs. Because these summarize the diverse opinions of a unique set of leaders, there was no overall uniformity of opinion or passion

about each lesson described below. I have tried to reflect the most passionate and pervasive sentiments of all those recorded in the course of the nine interviews.

The first was the need for leaders to self-reflect. Topics suggested for this study included personal ideas of what quality and learning, the values and beliefs of their organizations as embodied in their institutional mission statements, what they and their organizations want from the programming and evaluation, and what was reasonable evaluation and knowledge-generation in the context of their programming. In addition, leaders recommended that attention be paid to assessing the resources that can be brought to bear on the program and evaluation. Most leaders felt that individual attributes, especially one's intuitive sense, were critical and often under-rated resources, as collaboration rests on interpersonal relationships.

The second lesson was related to conceptualizations of quality. The majority of the leaders spoke passionately about the need for joint involvement of the corporate and academic partners in developing workable understandings of quality in the context of the project before, during, and the life of the program. Some leaders were adamant that philosophical compatibility should be a deal breaker. In other words, the first thing to be evaluated should be whether your prospective partner shares your conceptualization of overall program quality. The development of a written agreement, as in the form of a business plan, to capture initial, joint understandings and act as an evaluative guide was recommended. However, leaders stressed that ongoing adaptation of this guide was inevitable. Therefore, building one's comfort and skills in win-win negotiation and collaborative decision-making was a necessity.

The third dealt with power and equity. Most leaders learned to look at what contributes to the health of the partnership, as complementary to but not the same as those, which support the viability and success of their organizations. They recognized they and their partners possessed diverse sets of expertise. Maximizing strengths and minimizing weaknesses lead to a redistribution of power and influence across many facets of the partnership. People's new roles or duties were sometimes unorthodox in light of traditional organizational models. For example, in several partnerships corporate interests took either control of student assessment or aspects of instruction or curriculum design. In other instances, classic roles were maintained. This open examination of responsibilities and power was seen as appropriate in the context of the partnership because it promoted program quality. Consequently, leaders needed to redefine the construct of equity in partnership to recognize this restructuring.

The fourth concerned evaluative outputs. The leaders learned that they and their partners needed and expected different things from evaluation. Each had traditional, legalistic, professional, organizational, and personal motivations for evaluation. Each had individualistic assumptions, beliefs, values, or expectations of rigor. The formatting and content of each evaluative product was also distinctive in many cases dependent on its intended audience. Shared understanding of what each needed and expected from evaluation was important to enhance applicability of evaluation recommendations and satisfaction of any accountability criteria.

The fifth related to evaluation as a learning experience for collaborative leadership. The partners in the process of assessment, decision-making, application, experimentation, and re-investigation learned new skills, attitudes, or knowledge that

enriched them as individuals. The learning was two-way. In other words, leaders taught others and they, themselves, learned. As part of this, they gained a better sense of who their partnering organization was and how their program integrated into its operation. This enabled most leaders to serve and empower their counterparts more effectively through and in evaluation.

The sixth lesson was about the life-span of collaborative evaluation. All leaders learned that their assessment of the program was ongoing. Evaluation by leaders lasted as long as, and even after, the program itself. Thus, the body of their evaluative knowledge gained was both evolutionary and motivational. It spurred more investigation and attention to quality throughout the program, which continually added insights to their knowledge base. Its developmental nature allowed the leaders to nurture a deep and workable understanding of the program as a whole. This aspect of evaluation was heavily retrospective and incorporated praxis, as a component of sensemaking.

The seventh revolved around evaluative choices. The leaders learned that informal and formal approaches were both useful. They "thought outside the box" to create blended methodologies and innovative techniques that worked for them in each particular application. They became assertive in continually redesigning assessment to respond to emerging needs as their programs matured. They felt that they developed expertise in informal strategies, which gave them rich, accessible, ongoing, first-hand, and cogent feedback. These approaches also allowed them to model collaborative attitudes and skills, as well as, engage in relationship building with assorted stakeholders.

The eighth lesson described how the leaders learned to involve others in their evaluation, primarily via qualitative techniques. For example, some sought feedback in

the form of information or statistics from students (past, current, prospective), partners, instructors, management, peers, internal technical experts or information specialists, affiliates, competitors, government, and so on. In doing so, they employed diverse collection techniques, including purposeful or random sampling, semi or unstructured interviews, and written questionnaires. They also used case studies, product, or performance reviews, and ethnographic experiences.

The ninth learning dealt with their appreciation that their assessment of one aspect of the program could have unanticipated positive outcomes in another facet of the programming. This was linked to the "big picture" of the program, which they developed over time. Several mentioned that in initial forays into assessment, they were not aware of the interconnectedness of various components of their projects. Neither were they aware of how certain aspects of the program related to other parts of their domain. As their vision of the program became clearer through ongoing assessment and sensemaking, then the applicability of old insights to new situations emerged.

The tenth lesson revolved around the issue of organizational learning. Leaders gained a sense of how what they learned in this partnership could potentially help their organizations in future initiatives, including extending or modifying this partnership program. Most leaders commented that this was an ongoing facet of relationship building, which spoke clearly to the categorization of their partnership, as a one-shot contract training deal or a long term alliance. Some also testified that these evaluative insights transformed their organizations in terms of collaborative evaluative capacity or in other significant ways related to institutional procedures or context.

Subquestion Five: What strategies did leaders feel helped them evaluate the progress and quality of their venture and why?

The leaders felt that idiosyncratic blends of a variety of assessment approaches, including elements of Objectives-based Review, Systems Evaluation, Case Study Method, Professional or Expert Review, and the Kirkpatrick worked best for them. The choices made were heavily influenced by the situation in which the leaders found themselves and the facet of the program that they wished to evaluate at any moment in time. In this, they opted for adaptive rather than prescriptive methodologies.

The leaders promoted continual sensemaking, exploiting a variety of informal data collection opportunities. They felt that this hypersensitivity allowed them to perceive interruptions in the flow of the programming, which then were either dismissed or served as cues for further investigation. The findings showed that their attentiveness lead to continual program improvement, more informed and responsive decision-making, and heightened evaluation awareness. They found that informal strategies worked well in that they reflected the co-operative and dynamic nature of the partnership, as well as, built on the foundation of strong relationships that underpinned their initiatives. Such strategies encouraged stakeholder participation in evaluation, and therefore, offered the leaders a realistic and workable base of information and data upon which to build evaluative knowledge. Although some leaders expressed the need for more formal evaluation to fulfil accountability to specific audiences, they found that informal assessment covered many of their formative needs and created a base of knowledge that was accessible at a future date for summative purposes.

Most leaders vouched their support for qualitative data and information over quantitative. Some reasons given included the incredible richness of the feedback, the fact that the information is not filtered through second parties and masked or missed by instrument deficits, the immediacy and accessibility of the data and information, the flexibility and responsiveness of qualitative strategies, the complementary relationship between qualitative techniques and the dynamics of collaboration, as well as, the potential to involve others selectively, thereby targeting the best informants about specific facets of the program.

In situations where legal, professional, or student assessment dictated more controlled verification of evaluative judgements, more systematic and quantitative techniques were recommended. This included evidence of performance to fulfil criteria of accreditation exams, graduation requirements for professional certification, governmental key performance indicators, budget analysis, or product review. Such strategies were also included in programming, where there was increased risk and liability. In addition, several leaders commented on the value of formal data collection to build archival records and ensure more standardized data collection by a variety of investigators, as in the creation of pictorial histories as evaluative data.

Main Research Question: What were the perceptions of the leaders of exemplary corporate-community college partnerships, as knowledge creators, on the relationship between evaluation and program quality and progress?

The leaders of these exemplary projects felt, as accountable knowledge-creators, that both informal and formal evaluation promoted the success, quality, and progress of their programs. Most leaders saw themselves as participatory, internal evaluators,

engaged in quantitative or qualitative data collection and analysis regarding many aspects of their programming. They used and developed expertise as evaluators and intuitive sensemakers in the course of their program experiences. As a result of evaluation, the leaders gained a deep yet manageable understanding of the status, quality, and progress of their programming.

Informal and qualitative investigation played a significant role in program assessment, and produced findings, which were usually applied. Sensemaking was an important feature of their evaluative practice. Formal assessment was essential in situations, where professional certification, accreditation, risk and liability, or standardized procedures, were concerns. The leaders' ongoing commitment to evaluation promoted a culture of quality in the programming, served as support for decision-making, satisfied accountability needs, promoted continual program improvement, and informed key stakeholders of program milestones.

They or their organizations were transformed by the sharing of evaluative insights. These contributions catalysed still more knowledge production by other institutional members, which promoted the philosophy of organizational learning.

Conclusions

The following section discusses seventeen conclusions that were derived from the findings of this investigation.

1. The respondents acted as internal evaluators in keeping with their roles, as legitimate leaders, within their organizations.

2. There was formative and summative evaluation occurring in all programs, although the lines of demarcation between these categories were frequently blurred. Formative feedback was used summatively.
3. There was a wide range of awareness about evaluation amongst the leaders. Most took a more innovative stance of what constituted evaluation, including sensemaking and informal approaches as legitimate forms of evaluation.
4. Formal assessment occurred in all programs, although most leaders did not call what they did systematic assessment.
5. Formal evaluation was more pronounced in programming, where liability and risk were high and assessment was mandated, in programs tied to an accreditation process, or to satisfy graduation requirements for professional certification.
6. Informal assessment was used extensively in all programs. It was favoured for all partnership components, except student or teacher evaluation and product review. Expert judgement dominated these facets of the programming.
7. Qualitative information and data were collected more commonly and with more enthusiasm than was quantitative data.
8. Observation and interviewing (semi-structured or unstructured) were widely espoused as the best forms of qualitative data and information collection.
9. The leaders used idiosyncratic blends of both academic and training evaluative approaches in their programs. The composition of these evaluative recipes changed over time to meet program and stakeholder needs. Kirkpatrick level 1 evaluations were completed to give students an opportunity to give feedback on their satisfaction with the learning experiences and, as several leaders commented, due to

traditional practice. Kirkpatrick level 2 evaluations were used in all programs to provide a formal basis for student assessment.

10. Leaders were cognizant of factors, such as monetary or promotional uses of evaluation, which could potentially bias their assessments, yet they did not address this predisposition overtly in their assessment activities.
11. The evaluative insights and experiences gained by leaders transformed themselves and their programming in positive ways. They strengthened evaluative expertise and nurtured a culture of quality in their programs.
12. The knowledge, shared by the leaders within their organizations, added to the collective knowledge base of the institutions and became an organizational asset that enhanced the vitality and viability of those entities.
13. There are diverse visions of quality and evaluation in operation in these collaborative partnerships. Negotiation and two-way communication to develop mutual understandings of these constructs enhanced assessment and decision-making.
14. Many of the recommendations from formal, but especially informal evaluation, were implemented quickly into the program. Actual applicability from assessment in these exemplary programs exceeded theoretical predictions.
15. Evaluative knowledge creation involved continual dialogue between leaders and multiple stakeholders, as well as, reliance on assorted information or technical experts.
16. Most leaders expected and actively facilitated a collaborative approach to program assessment and decision-making. This collaboration did not seek equity in the

evaluative roles of the corporate and academic leaders. In some cases, it led to distinct yet accepted inequities, as evaluative power was redistributed to capitalize on partners' strengths. Therefore, leaders, especially corporate, often assumed non-traditional roles in assessing the program.

17. There were significant barriers to evaluation. The most pressing were contextual and procedural differences between colleges and businesses. Some internal collegiate barriers were noted.

Recommendations

These seventeen conclusions form the basis of a discussion of my fifteen recommendations for practice and theory. In keeping with the tenets of qualitative research, each reader should judge the applicability of the recommendations for practice, as they feel each one is valid and transferable to his or her individual context.

For Practice

1. Collaborative programming should include formal and informal evaluation from the planning phase through to program end. Leaders should develop shared understandings of quality and evaluation, and capture these in written partnership guidelines that will evolve as the program matures. A portfolio format, as seen in one partnership herein, is relatively easy to maintain over time.
2. Practitioners should engage in retrospective activities about evaluation as part of good management practice. Personal bias and motivations should be addressed. Time should be built into their individual schedules to allow for these sensemaking opportunities. Tools like those used in this study, such as personal diaries,

electronic journals, tape recorders, or voice-activated software, should be accessible so that the insights gained by this reflection can be recorded with maximum ease.

3. Several leaders commented on what they felt was a poor relationship between feedback on closed written questionnaires and true learner satisfaction. Colleges might do well to use purposeful or random sampling from a class to gather qualitative feedback on the course experience.

4. There are serious contextual barriers to evaluation between the collegiate and corporate partners. Building shared understandings of language, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, norms, history, and values can ameliorate these problems. Providing opportunities for academic faculty and corporate staff to work together and socialize can help bridge contextual barriers. Corporate field or internal placements with established partnerships should be available to any faculty seriously interested in collaboration. The secondment of corporate staff to academic providers in instructional or administrative roles and the rotation of staff, especially management, into existing partnerships, should also be promoted. Participants would be better able to act as guides and navigators and be successful collaborators. Also, academics and corporate leaders would be advised to read each others' evaluation and education literature, so as to get a sense of the philosophies and approaches currently being used and actively investigated.

5. In collegiate interviews, comment was made that there were some contextual barriers within the academic community. To overcome this internal issue, senior administration needs to take an active role in modelling two-way dialogue and encouraging collaboration in-house. Internal lines and procedures for

communication should be established early in the planning phase and maintained throughout the life span of the partnership. To enhance the collaborative ethic, understandings between culturally distinct program areas, and encourage the habit of individual knowledge transfer to others, working relationships and job assignments across departmental and divisional lines should be the norm internally not the exception. As Senge (1997) points out, "Learning arises through performance and practice. ...It will be necessary to redesign work if progressive ideas are to find their way into the mainstream..." (p. 18). A model, which uses an interdisciplinary, team-based approach merits consideration, as it copies that seen in these exemplary collaborations.

6. Organizations would do well to develop a culture of evaluation by offering formal opportunities for discussion of assessment in which to share insights from practice and the literature. All leaders should be expected to discuss their evaluative philosophies and share research methodologies.
7. It would be wise for organizations, interested in partnership programming and evaluation, to take advantage of natural leadership available in-house. Collaborators have unique expertise, which is a valued organizational asset. Recognizing these, as resources and even mentors would complement the role leadership plays in external collaboration. These individuals could facilitate the sharing of knowledge in a variety of formal and informal ways, which would spur the ongoing dialogue needed to promote a culture of quality in entrepreneurialism.

8. Care should be taken that collaborative programming, which uses a blended approach for evaluation, has some formal records of the assessment done so that this template may be conserved for future reference and reflection.

For Theory

1. This exploratory investigation has clearly shown the need for more research into the links between contemporary leadership and collaborative evaluation. There is a gap in the literature that needs to address questions, such as does leadership style, categorization of partnership, management and collaborative experience of the leaders, legitimate status or program content expertise of the leader, size and resources of the partnering organizations, motivations for partnership, or collaborative experience of the organizations, correlate with a predisposition for any particular evaluative approaches? And most importantly, how exactly is contemporary leadership affected by evaluative expectations? And how does that change, if at all, in a collaborative leadership dynamic?
2. There is a significant gap in the literature regarding the relationship between sensemaking and evaluation as knowledge creation in collaborative environments. Future investigations need look at sensemaking and how leaders use sensemaking as a foundation for all informal evaluation. The issue of bias needs further exploration in this regard, as sensemaking discards most information not thought usable. The tie between sensemaking expertise and evaluative intuition also is a tantalizing subject for investigation.

3. There is a weak point in the literature regarding informal evaluation. This is troublesome in light of the significant role that unplanned and unstructured assessment played in these exemplary projects. The literature laments the dearth of application of evaluative findings in programming, yet these findings suggest that most informal recommendations were used. There is no explanation in the literature as to why this would be so. Consequently, there are, I suspect, significant findings still to be made on the logic behind, techniques used in, and forms of knowledge created via informal evaluation. There would be value in further investigating how formally and informally generated knowledge are integrated with each other and within the organizational knowledge base.
4. The diversity evidenced in formal evaluation techniques suggests that there are innovative strategies and instruments in practice, some using emergent technologies. This expertise is currently isolated within individual programs and organizations. Further research could inform the literature of these methods and possibly strengthen existing dialogue between collaborative practitioners and theorists. This examination is especially critical as the number of collaborative ventures is rising, and the accountability ethic is driving more evaluation. Due to the trend towards more participative leadership, decentralization of authority, and decreased resources, these evaluations are favouring internal rather than external assessment. The insights gathered from current literature and practitioners would be a valuable resource for the field of adult education.
5. Partnership literature would benefit from an examination of the nature of power and equity in professionally based collaborative programming. Finding answers to

questions, such as does technical expertise truly contribute to increased power in a partnership program devoted to that technical field? If so, how does that relate to fiscal power? How do inequitable power distributions affect evaluation and programming quality? What educational assumptions, beliefs, and values underlie the methodologies chosen by those "in power"? Since community colleges are at a financial disadvantage in collaboration with larger corporate interests, it would also be valuable for colleges to know exactly what factors contribute to enhanced power, apart from monetary contributions, so that they could exploit what advantages they have.

6. The community college is a critical part of postsecondary education in Canada. Ongoing research needs to track the evolving character of this organization and correlate emergent contextual factors with programming trends, evaluative approaches, and leadership styles. An essential question is whether or not the traditional community college is evolving, and if so, into what, how fast, promoted by what, and with what ramifications for postsecondary education and society?

7. There is a clear gap in perceptions of corporate and academic literature on the differences between training and education. Writers hold opposing views on what each side in this debate is doing or hoping to achieve in their individual practices. And there is a dearth of academic comment. Work needs to be done on bridging this theoretical divide, as it is apparent that such programming is becoming a normal part of adult educational practice at the community college level.

Personal Reflections

Community colleges are a central part of postsecondary life, helping all manner of Canadian adults achieve their academic and professional goals (Dennison, 1995; Dougherty, 1994). Despite its achievements, the college, as an organization, is battling pressures never seen before in its history. Collaboration with business and industry is one way to ameliorate some of the deficits and face some of the challenges. It is a growth industry in Canadian community colleges. As Knowles (1995) said it "...will increasingly permeate all spheres of college activity" (p.204). Collegiate leadership and decision-making reflects these complexities and changes.

I believe we are witnessing a significant evolutionary progression of the college, as an organization, with the true depth of transformation becoming evident only in retrospective analysis. I wonder the mass of Canadian instructors and administrators will translate this new ideology into their personal practices, as these changes sweep across their familiar working landscape. Most of all, I wonder about the overall quality of the learning experiences that future students of collaborative programming will enjoy. These are not idle speculations because in the course of my research I have seen the passion, energy, wisdom, and commitment it takes to run an exemplary program. It is extraordinary. And while I celebrate the innovation and incredible expertise of these leaders, I pause and think about the majority of learners, who will not benefit from such caring, expert leadership. Those students, whose programming that even while operating with the sincerest of intentions, is hampered by naïve leaders, who are learning collaboration on the job, while grounded and acknowledged expertise lies untapped. In particular, I am worried by the lack of academic debate on this incredibly important topic,

which speaks to the essence of who adult educators are and what quality adult learning means in collaborative programming. Rather than comparative silence, the literature and postsecondary institutions should be alive with discussion and research on all facets of collaboration. As professionals dedicated to learning, it makes eminent sense to learn as much about the trends and forces that form our context.

Personally, I look upon this research study as an intense and rich educational experience. My teachers were the leaders of the exemplary partnerships that I explored; they shared their wisdom with graciousness and candor. I have learned many lessons from their sharing.

I no longer believe that sensemaking and knowledge creation are separate processes. The lines have become blurred because what I think what we perceive forms the foundation from which all our knowledge of self and our endeavours emerges. The process of learning is, therefore, as intimate and profound an act, as any that we undertake as human beings. As Weick (1995) said, "People make sense of things by seeing a world on which they have already imposed what they believe" (p. 15). Because of that, I suspect that sensemaking and knowledge creation have a cyclical relationship, where understanding is layered through repetitions of perception, evaluation, elimination or investigation, interpretation, and integration, wherein the goal is not so much absolute truth as it is plausibility and enhanced clarity. Judgement of worth and of relevancy is at the heart of our sensemaking and knowledge creation, as we discard much of what we perceive as being irrelevant or unacceptable, since it goes against our beliefs and expectations of what we should sense. This has profound implications for evaluative knowledge creation. It reaffirms the subjectivity and sociopolitical flavour of all

evaluation, as well as, hints at the limits of understanding possible in any evaluative act. Most importantly, it says that the recognition and acknowledgement of researcher beliefs is critical, especially in retrospection. All evaluators must keep in mind that "Retrospection only makes the past clearer than the present or future; it cannot make the past transparent" (Weick, 1995, p. 29). What one values, needs, or wants, as either the evaluator or the client of evaluation, will define not only what is evaluated, but how rigorously because these criteria give meaning to that which is to be investigated.

In the challenging and often frenetic world of contemporary leadership, evaluation is a normal outgrowth of authority and accountability. Leaders, as one respondent said, are the places, where the "buck stops." In their role, decision-making and evaluation are habitual and inseparable events. The respondents in this study have shown that the unexpected sibling of this pair is transformative, knowledge creation. As Senge (1997) so aptly put it, "Learning is dangerous. Communities of learning give support, insight, and fellowship to face threats to mental constructs and beliefs" (p. 18).

The collaborative ventures studied show the power of the interdisciplinary team. The academic and corporate leadership union absorbed stress and created initiatives that thrived in high change environments, which challenged cultural norms and personal habits or expectations. I think that it is an ethical and professional responsibility of administration to investigate and promote interdisciplinary team-based working environments for areas of their community colleges, especially where collaboration is or is likely to be a factor. If senior administration supports academic capitalism, then it must help either help its organizational members prepare for the coming changes or accept the downsides, which include a loss of product quality. Faculty familiarity and

expertise in accountable, empowered team-based situations will be a decisive factor in whether they and their organizations remain healthy and productive through the partnership process.

Also, I believe that evaluation occurs all the time as part of academic or corporate leadership, whether one is a teacher, manager, coordinator, company owner, dean, chairperson, or supervisor. I truly believe that there are gaps between the literature and current practice, which are exacerbated by the cultural differences between academic and corporate practitioners and theorists. Collaboration history shows that these lines are becoming arbitrary, at least at the community college level (Dennison, 1995; Dougherty, 1994; Knowles, 1995). Perhaps it is time to seek understanding and enlightenment of our natural linkages, and exploit the body of grounded knowledge that exists in both domains.

Lastly, this study was an experiential learning event for me, in which I gained expertise as an interviewer and researcher. My respondents were adept interviewers themselves. They were hypersensitive to my personal body language and vocal cues (tone, pauses, cadence, and pitch). I realized that if I was more spontaneous, demonstrating my interest, encouraging their story telling, not asking redundant questions, or sticking too closely to my interview schedule, the participants would respond.

This research was a reflective exercise. The respondents were sensemaking from their own past experiences. This was a complex and nonlinear activity. Consequently, the interviews had high and low speed moments, as respondents revisited ideas or realized new relationships in what they had previously said. The participants, in setting

the pace and direction of the interviews, generated a more realistic, less politically sanitized, and pre-digested interpretation of how they saw the phenomenon.

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Appendix A: Letter Inviting College to Participate in the Study

Date

Dear _____:

I am a graduate student in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. My thesis is examining the role of formal and informal evaluative activities in exemplary college and business-industry collaboration in Alberta. This descriptive study will explore the experiences of and insights gained by both partners in the partnership. Your College's partnership is such an exemplary partnership, which I am extremely interested in including in my research. This quality venture is a part of the history of adult education in our province. The insights, which your partnership leader(s) can provide, is (are) a valuable resource to others, who are interested in collaboration.

Therefore, I would like the College's permission to approach the educational leaders in these partnerships. These individuals will be asked to participate in a one-hour, face to face interview with me in late February, March, or April. Information about the interview will be provided to respondents in advance. Based on these discussions, I will identify issues and themes in order to draw conclusions about the role that evaluation plays in exemplary college and business-industry partnerships. This investigation will help ensure that the wisdom gained by your partnership leaders is preserved. In this way, the College can help inform future postsecondary practice and influence developing partnership theory.

The University of Alberta sanctions this research project. It meets standards as outlined in the University's Research Ethics Policy and Procedures. All aspects of

college and individual voluntary participation will be kept confidential, unless you and all partnership participants waive that right. Any themes derived from the analysis and transcriptions will not reveal the College's or the participant's identity, unless written permission is given to do so. Only closed, private conversations with my thesis supervisors may contain references to specific partnership. All interviews will be audio taped and transcribed, with participant consent. Pseudonyms will be used in the interviews, and transcripts will be coded to further preserve confidentiality. Only sections of the interview and my interpretations of those sections approved by the participant may be used for the study.

Participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any time until June 15, 1999 or refrain from answering any questions in the interview. Tapes will be destroyed immediately after transcription. All transcripts and database materials will be held in secure storage for 5 years until June 15, 2004; they will then be destroyed; handling of these materials will be in accordance with FIOP. Themes, concepts and information from approved sections of the interviews will be used in my thesis and oral examination, and in the future for potential reports, presentations at conferences or other venues, journal papers, and book chapters. Questions or concerns may be brought forward at any time by contacting the researcher (cathydh@telusplanet.net or 458-6817) or the researcher's supervisor, Dr. Paula Brook (paula.brook@ualberta.ca or 492-7949).

I would be most grateful if you could forward my submission to the internal approval process for consideration. If your College is interested in participating in this study, please read and complete the attached form and return it to me in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided. In order to facilitate contacting participants in a timely

fashion, I would appreciate it if an email notification of the College's decision could also be sent. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Davis-Herbert

FORMS and RESEARCH SUMMARY ATTACHED

Appendix B: College Organizational Consent Form

ACKNOWLEDGE AND CONSENT

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents of this letter regarding the proposed graduate research study. I understand that

1. The name of the institution or participants recommended will not be mentioned or referenced in any written materials or presentations, unless written permission to do so is granted;
2. Themes and concepts will be taken from the questionnaires and transcribed interviews without reference to any specific participants or institutions, unless written permission to do so is granted;
3. Themes, concepts and issues will be used in the researcher's Master Thesis, oral examination and final reports for participants, as well as in the future for presentations at conferences or other venues, journal articles/publications, and book chapters;
4. Although the interviews will be audiotaped, tapes will be destroyed after transcription. Transcriptions will be kept in secure storage until June 15, 2004 and then destroyed. These materials will be handled in accordance with FIOP legislation;
5. Computer disks for the database will be kept in secure storage, as per item 11 above, and then destroyed;

6. The institution that I am affiliated with may withdraw from the study at any time until June 15, 1999 by contacting the researcher or her supervisor;
7. I can contact the researcher or her supervisor if the institution I am affiliated with has any concerns or questions regarding the any aspect of the process or procedures of this study.

I have read and understand the processes and conditions for participating in this research study and I, _____ (*please print your name)*, give permission to Catherine Davis-Herbert to include our institution in the University of Alberta research project as described.

_____ _____

Signature & Title Date

Appendix C: College Nomination Sheet

Instructions

The college partner is asked to nominate 1-2 representatives, who are individuals recognized by the institution as the key administrators or initiators of this partnership. They will be asked to participate in a one-hour face-to-face interview. Their feedback, based on their experience, will provide a picture of the role formal and informal evaluation plays in quality partnerships. A quality partnership, such as this one, is one that has been recognized publicly as truly exemplary.

The researcher will contact nominated individuals. The decision to participate in the study is that of the candidate. Participation is voluntary, and the nominee must sign a consent form to be included. He or she may withdraw at any time until June 15, 1999. He or she may refrain from answering any portion of the questionnaire or, if applicable, the interview. The respondent will be given the opportunity to review and amend his or her portion of interview transcript, as well as, my interpretation of that material, to be used in the study prior to its inclusion.

College Nomination Form

Nominee Name	Job Title	Email	Work Phone	Work Fax
1.				
2.				

Appendix D: Corporate Consent to Participate in the Study

Date

Dear _____:

My name is Catherine Davis-Herbert. I am currently a graduate student in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. My thesis will examine the role of formal and informal evaluation in exemplary college and business-industry collaboration in Alberta. This descriptive study will explore the experiences of and insights gained by both partners in outstanding partnerships. The _____ program is such a recognized partnership program. Its leadership has developed expertise and insights into the relationship of day to day and long term accountability to partnership and program quality. Their knowledge and advice would be a valuable resource to others interested in collaboration.

I would like permission to approach your organization's representative for the _____ program; this person should be the recognized leader in the administration and co-ordination of this collaborative program. This individual will be asked to participate in a one-hour, face to face or telephone interview in March or early April. Information about the interview will be provided to the respondent in advance. From their feedback, I will identify issues and themes to draw conclusions about the value of evaluation to quality college and business-industry partnerships. This investigation will help ensure that the wisdom gained by your partnership leader is preserved. In this way, your firm can help inform future higher education practice and influence developing partnership theory.

The University of Alberta and Keyano College sanctions this research project. It meets standards as outlined in their Research Ethics Policy and Procedures. All aspects of corporate and individual voluntary participation will be kept confidential, unless you and your partner and respective representatives waive that right in writing. Any themes derived from the analysis and transcriptions will not reveal company or participant identity, unless written permission is given to do so. Only closed, private conversations with my supervisors may contain references to specific partnership. All interviews will be audio taped and transcribed, with participant consent.

Participants have the right to withdraw from the project at any time until June 15, 1999 or refrain from answering any questions in the interview. Tapes will be destroyed immediately after transcription. All transcripts and database materials will be held in secure storage for use in the study will be kept in secure storage for 5 years from June 15, 1999. They will then be destroyed according to FIOP. Themes, concepts and information from interviews will be used in my thesis and oral examination, and in the future for potential reports, presentations at conferences or other venues, journal papers, and book chapters. Questions or concerns may be brought forward at any time by contacting the researcher (cathydh@telusplanet.net or 458-6817) or the researcher's supervisor, Dr. Paula Brook (paula.brook@ualberta.ca or 492-7949).

If your company is interested in participating in this study, please read and complete the attached form and return it to me. In order to facilitate interview scheduling, an additional email confirmation would be appreciated. If additional in-house review is required, I would appreciate it if your office could forward the necessary form work to me for completion. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Davis-Herbert

FORMS AND RESEARCH SUMMARY ATTACHED

Appendix E: Corporate Acknowledgement and Consent

CORPORATE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONSENT

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents of this letter regarding the proposed graduate research study. I understand that

1. The name of the organization or participants recommended will not be mentioned or referenced in any written materials or presentations, unless written permission to do so is granted;
2. Themes and concepts will be taken from the questionnaires and transcribed interviews without reference to any specific participants or corporations, unless written permission to do so is granted;
3. Themes, concepts and issues will be used in the researcher's Masters Thesis, oral examination and final reports for participants, as well as in the future for presentations at conferences or other venues, journal articles/publications, and book chapters;
4. Although the interviews will be audiotaped, tapes will be destroyed after transcription. Transcriptions will be kept in secure storage until June 15, 2004 and then destroyed;
5. Computer disks for the database will be kept in secure storage, as per item 11 above, and then destroyed;

6. The corporation that I am affiliated with may withdraw from the study at any time until June 15, 1999 by contacting the researcher or her supervisor;
7. I can contact the researcher or her supervisor if the company I am affiliated with has any concerns or questions regarding the any aspect of the process or procedures of this study.

I have read and understand the processes and conditions for participating in this research study and I, _____ (*please print your name)*, give permission to Catherine Davis-Herbert to include our organization in the University of Alberta research project as described.

_____ _____

Signature & Title Date

Appendix F: Corporate Nomination Sheet

Instructions

Each corporate partner is asked to nominate a representative, who is the individual recognized by the organization as the key administrators or initiators of the partnership. He or she will be asked to participate in a one-hour face-to-face or telephone interview. The feedback provided, based on his or her experience, will provide a picture of the role formal and informal evaluation plays in quality partnerships. A quality partnership, such as yours, is one that has been recognized publicly as truly exemplary.

The researcher will contact the nominated individual. The decision to participate in the study is that of the candidate. Participation is voluntary, and the nominee must sign a consent form to be included. He or she may withdraw at any time until June 15, 1999. He or she may refrain from answering any portion of the questionnaire or, if applicable, the interview. The respondent will be given the opportunity to review and amend his or her portion of interview transcript used in the study prior to its inclusion.

Nomination Form

Nominee Name	Job Title	Email	Work Phone	Work Fax
1.				
2. (Alternate)				

Appendix G: Corporate Representative Consent Form

ACKNOWLEDGE AND CONSENT

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents of this letter regarding the proposed graduate research study. I understand that

1. The name of the organization or participants recommended will not be mentioned or referenced in any written materials or presentations, unless written permission to do so is granted;
2. Themes and concepts will be taken from the questionnaires and transcribed interviews without reference to any specific participants or corporations, unless written permission to do so is granted;
3. Themes, concepts and issues will be used in the researcher's Masters Thesis, oral examination and final reports for participants, as well as in the future for presentations at conferences or other venues, journal articles/publications, and book chapters;
4. Although the interviews will be audiotaped, tapes will be destroyed after transcription. Transcriptions will be kept in secure storage until June 15, 2004 and then destroyed;

5. Computer disks for the database will be kept in secure storage, as per item 11 above, and then destroyed;
6. The corporation that I am affiliated with may withdraw from the study at any time until June 15, 1999 by contacting the researcher or her supervisor;
7. I can contact the researcher or her supervisor if the company I am affiliated with has any concerns or questions regarding the any aspect of the process or procedures of this study.

I have read and understand the processes and conditions for participating in this research study and I, _____ (*please print your name)*, give permission to Catherine Davis-Herbert to include me in the University of Alberta research project as described.

_____ _____

Signature & Title Date

Appendix H: College Representative Consent Form

ACKNOWLEDGE AND CONSENT

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents of this letter regarding the proposed graduate research study. I understand that:

1. The name of the college or participants recommended will not be mentioned or referenced in any written materials or presentations, unless written permission to do so is granted;
2. Themes and concepts will be taken from the questionnaires and transcribed interviews without reference to any specific participants or organizations, unless written permission to do so is granted;
3. Themes, concepts and issues will be used in the researcher's Masters Thesis, oral examination and final reports for participants, as well as in the future for presentations at conferences or other venues, journal articles/publications, and book chapters;
4. Although the interviews will be audiotaped, tapes will be destroyed after transcription. Transcriptions will be kept in secure storage until June 15, 2004 and then destroyed;
5. Computer disks for the database will be kept in secure storage, as per item 11 above, and then destroyed;

6. The college that I am affiliated with may withdraw from the study at any time until June 15, 1999 by contacting the researcher or her supervisor;
7. I can contact the researcher or her supervisor if the college I am affiliated with has any concerns or questions regarding the any aspect of the process or procedures of this study.

I have read and understand the processes and conditions for participating in this research study and I, _____ (*please print your name)*, give permission to Catherine Davis-Herbert to include me in the University of Alberta research project as described.

_____ _____

Signature & Title Date

Appendix I: Interview Guide

Introduction

- Thank-you for agreeing to take part in this study. It is part of my master's degree in adult and higher education at the University of Alberta. My study looks at how organizational knowledge is built while leaders formally and informally evaluate exemplary corporate and college partnerships. I'm interested in your personal experiences in this partnership.
- Our discussions are confidential. If there is a question you'd like to omit, just tell me and we'll move on. If you would like come back to a question, we can do that too.
- To make sure that I accurately record your feedback, I'd like your permission to audiotape and transcribe this interview. I'll ask you to proof parts of the transcription I'd like to use and modify them as needed. Only parts you check will be used in my thesis.
- Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can withdraw at any time until June 15th, 1999 by contacting either my supervisor or myself. Here is a copy of the contact information.
- In doing the research for this study, I have found that there is very little information on Canadian collaboration, especially from a leaders' perspective. Your feedback today is very valuable.
- I'll proceed with my 4 questions, which should take about an hour.

Questionnaire

1. (Essential) Tell me how you came to be involved in the partnership.
2. (Essential) How do you know that the program is working?
   a) (Extra to 1.) Could you tell me how you measure and demonstrate that you have met your outcomes?
3. (Essential) What advice about gauging quality would you like to pass on to others, who are thinking about entering into a partnership program?
4. (Essential) Do you think what you know now as a leader and a member of your organization will make you and your organization better collaborators in the future?

Closure

- Well, that concludes my questions for you. Do you have any questions for me?
- Thank-you so much for your time and candor. This was a really insightful interview and it was a pleasure to talk with you. I wish you and your partners continued success in the partnership.

Participant Copy for Pre-Interview Viewing

1. Tell me how you came to be involved in the partnership?
2. How do you know that the program is working?
3. What advice about gauging quality would you like to pass on to others, who are thinking about entering into a partnership program?
4. Do you think what you know now as a leader and a member of your organization will make you and your organization better collaborators in the future?